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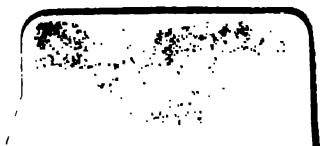
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**A
WINTER
IN
ICELAND AND LAPLAND.**

VOL. I.







VIEW OF THE VILLAGE

A
WINTER
IN
ICELAND AND LAPLAND.

BY
THE HON. ARTHUR DILLON.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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A WINTER IN ICELAND.

CHAPTER I.

Voyage from Copenhagen to Reikiavik—Prince of
Denmark—Visit to Bessestad.

IN the beginning of 1834 I determined on seeing Iceland, and learning something of the manners of the natives of that country. After many inquiries at Lloyd's and other such places, I found that there existed no direct communication between England and Iceland: I

decided, therefore, on proceeding at once to Copenhagen, and taking a passage in one of the regular traders that leave Denmark every spring for that island. In order to avoid the almost impracticable road between Hamburg and Lubec, I chose the way of Gottenburg. A newly-established steamer took me from Hull to that port in sixty hours, but on landing I found that owing to the bad management of the steam-packets in that quarter, three days would elapse before the arrival of the *Prinds Carl*, a vessel plying between Christiania and Copenhagen, and calling on her route at Gottenburg.

At the moment the delay occasioned by this was no source of regret, as it gave me an opportunity of visiting whatever is remarkable in the town and its environs. Great, however, was my disappointment on reaching the Danish capital, in finding that the last ship destined to sail for some time to Iceland had weighed anchor the night previous, and actually passed us under the Castle of Helsingore. The mer-

chant from whom I got this unwelcome intelligence, could only offer me the chance of a passage in one of two ships which he expected would return to Copenhagen about the middle of July.

To employ the intervening time, I wandered through Sweden from Gottenburg to Stockholm, and from the confines of Lapland to Malmoe. After getting scorched by day and frozen by night in the forests of Bothnia, viewing the treasures in the depths of the silver and copper mines of Dalecarlia, every where delighted by the beauties of the scenery and the urbanity of the inhabitants, I returned again to Denmark. Here my expectations were again to be disappointed. Of the two ships that were looked for in Copenhagen, the merchant informed me, one had been wrecked on the Icelandic coast, and the other was not yet returned. He endeavoured to dissuade me from undertaking the voyage that year. The season he said, was too far advanced, and should I

reach Iceland, my stay there must necessarily be very short, as the ship would delay its return to Denmark as little as possible. If, however, I was determined on proceeding, he recommended me as a preferable alternative to try to procure a passage in a Danish man-of-war, which would shortly be sent to fetch back the Prince of Denmark. This personage, owing to some disagreement with his father-in-law the king, had been sent to spend the summer in that remote quarter of the world.

Such a boon was hardly to be looked for ; but upon mentioning the subject to a gentleman of the English Legation, he had the goodness to give me a letter to the admiral at the head of the marine. This officer mentioned my request to the king, who was pleased to allow me a passage to Reikiavik. On the 10th of August we set sail, but, owing to the wind being unfavourable, we anchored the same afternoon at Helsingore.

The Nyad was a corvette, of twenty guns,

chiefly used for exercising the cadets of the royal navy. Instead of being put on board men-of-war from first starting, the youngsters in Denmark are kept at a naval college till they are considered qualified to be appointed to ships as lieutenants, and are sent out in the summer for a three months' cruise to give them an insight into seamanship. The officers consisted of the captain, commander, and four lieutenants, who, as is the case with all their naval officers, spoke English as well as natives; two of them had been for some years in the French service, and wore the cross of the legion of honour, for being at Navarino and Algiers.

I found a fellow-passenger on board, with whom I had much conversation during the voyage, and who gave me much information about the country we were going to. He was a native of Iceland, who had distinguished himself as a boy at the school of Bessestad, and had subsequently attained the highest honours at the University of Copenhagen. At the conclusion

of his studies, he had undertaken to travel over the greater part of Europe, and had traversed France, Italy, Greece, and had been a short time in England. As a reward for his exertions the King of Denmark had conferred on him the church of Breide-Bolstadir, which is considered to be the most lucrative benefice in Iceland. He had not been home for several years. The prospect of returning with classical honours, and in possession of comparative independence must have been particularly delightful, as he left his country a poor and solitary student with little hope of advancement. He understood English and French pretty well, but finding that he spoke Italian very fluently, I preferred using that language with him, which had become habitual to me during nine years' residence in Tuscany.

There was no change of wind till the third day, on which we weighed anchor, and as the guns of Kronberg, the castle commanding the Sound, responded to the corvette's salute, we bade farewell in good earnest to Denmark.

The battlements on which Hamlet's father revisited the glimpses of the moon—the beautiful gardens of Marienlyst in which the tomb of Ophelia's lover, as well as the pool in which the damsel is supposed, by the ardent admirers of the fable, to have really drowned herself, are still pointed out; and lastly the isle of Hveen, where Tycho Brahe made his astronomical discoveries, gradually faded from the sight, and we continued on our course up the Cattegat.

On the evening of the thirteenth day we passed by Fair Isle, a small, lofty rock, inhabited by a few fishermen, and lying midway between the Shetlands and the Orkneys. Early next morning we were welcomed into the Atlantic by a gale of wind, and Foul Island, the most westerly of the Shetlands, appeared under our lee. A large three-masted ship, at first close to us, kept driving rapidly to leeward, and in all probability long before night left its wreck on the ill-omened isle. After a

lapse of three days the weather moderated, and we passed to the southward of the Feroe Isles, though not sufficiently near to see them. The change of latitude began now to be apparent by the temperature, and the thermometer fell twenty degrees of Reaumur, in the course of half as many days.

On making the south-western extremity of Iceland we encountered another heavy gale, accompanied with much rain and thick weather. After four days we had a favorable change, and the horizon being clear, we were enabled on the 21st day to see the land bearing N.E., and found that we were near the northern side of Faxè Fiord. The land before us, as viewed from the deck, formed a deep semicircular bay, bounded on the N.W. by the snow-capped Snæfiell Jokul, and its southern extremity was enclosed by a range of mountains, that run through the whole of Gulbringè Syssel, among which rose conspicuously a single mountain, called Koile and Sukkertopper from its pre-

sending the form of a perfect cone from every point of view. Along the coast lofty black mountains frowned in bleak majesty, terminating close to the water's edge, and strongly indented by deep friths, which penetrated into the interior as far as the eye could reach.

In the morning a pilot, for whom signals had been fired overnight, made his appearance in the distance: he presently came on board with two companions. The latter were in very sorry plight; they had been out all night, and their drenched clothes, together with their long hair, and unshaved faces, gave them by no means a prepossessing appearance. They steered us through some small islands, and brought us to anchor within a quarter of a mile of Reikiavik. There were but five ships in the harbour, and of these three were only awaiting our arrival to set sail, which they did that very evening. From the anchorage the town presented little more than an assemblage of red flags, as it is so low that

the roof only of the houses are visible from the water.

The captain, followed by some of his officers, my fellow-passenger, and myself, proceeded at once to the government house, a long stone building, formerly used as a prison. The exterior resembles a farm-house, and is whitewashed. Its only floor is surmounted by a lofty wooden roof, which contains garrets. In front a pretty well cultivated garden, with a stream flowing along the bottom of it, is entered by a neat wooden bridge. Altogether, though not very viceregal in its appearance, the house bore externally a far greater look of comfort than would have been expected by a stranger. On either side of the entrance were four good-sized windows, and at the back peeped out some smart timber buildings, painted red, evidently offices, which gave a relief to the white walls of the house.

M. de Kreiger, the governor, was at the door

in a scarlet uniform, waiting to receive the party; and having read a letter which I put into his hands, from a friend of his in London, he presented me to the exiled prince, who was lately returned from the interior, and had been anxiously waiting to embark for Denmark. This personage, who is the heir presumptive to the Danish throne, but whose chances of succession are at best problematical, was a young man of about five-and-twenty, rather short and slight, and of a general appearance not much calculated to draw attention. His suite consisted of two naval lieutenants, as aides-de-camp, and a physician, and a painter, though not exactly attached to his establishment, accompanied him in his excursions. The hurry of the prince to quit the seat of his banishment was such, that at first he proposed departing at once; but, upon consideration, his sailing was postponed till the following evening, so as to give him an opportunity of taking leave of the people in the neighbouring villages.

The governor invited me to dinner in the afternoon, where I met about twenty persons, chiefly officers, and a few merchants who had not yet returned to Copenhagen. The viands on the table in every respect surpassed what the climate of Reikiavik would have led me to expect. Among the numerous dishes there was no lack of vegetables, though they were necessarily limited in kinds and size. Broccoli, potatoes, salad, and cabbages about the size of a small orange, formed the principal. After dinner, the company adjourned to a neighbouring room, to indulge in cigars and coffee; and an Iclander, who had learnt to speak English during the course of several voyages to Leith, in the war-time, took me to a house kept by the merchants for the purpose of social meeting and card-playing. The latter amusement was not attempted that night, as a considerable number of the members appeared inclined to keep wassail after the true Danish style. One little round man in particular, whose rubicund face beamed

with universal benevolence, was bent on doing the honours of the place, and pursued me every where vociferating in an unknown tongue, which I afterwards found out was intended for French. The only foreigner there, was a countryman from Liverpool, who had been settled there upwards of twenty years, and had married an Icelfander. After midnight, finding that the company, though diminished in numbers, was only increasing in joviality, I took my leave of the merry companions, and made the best of my way in the dark to my lodgings.

My clerical friend had procured me apartments in the house of a merchant, who had sailed that morning for Copenhagen. They consisted of two rooms, much too lofty for so severe a climate, and destitute of stove or fireplace: an objection which obliged me three months afterwards to quit them, and seek for comfort in an humbler dwelling. As the furniture had been brought from Denmark, nothing but its scantiness would have been remarked; its

great cleanliness, however, a quality not every where found in Iceland was enough to make one overlook many deficiencies.

Walking down the street next morning, I heard my name called out of a very neat farmhouse, by one of the corvette's lieutenants, and was asked in to breakfast by the owner of it, the *landfoged*, or treasurer of the land. The repast was of the most substantial kind, seasoned by copious libations of champagne, in honour of the toasts which the prince proposed in taking farewell. At the announcement of each new toast, the whole of the company stood up and touched each other's glasses, an operation which took up several minutes, and prolonged the breakfast to the period usually allotted to a long dinner.

After breakfast we all mounted the horses of the prince, and started in a party for Havni-fiord and Bessestad. At our departure, and indeed during the whole of the day, it rained heavily, but to bad weather most of us had been

so much accustomed that no one noticed it. The first hour's ride was over ground alternately marshy and rocky, over which the ponies scrambled with great agility. The coasting of three deep fiords considerably lengthened the way, and compelled us to cross as many streams. Leaving behind us the last of these, we entered a part of the country entirely covered with lava; the ground had lost all appearance of vegetation, and presented nothing to the sight—but a field of black cinders, produced by the burning of the stone. The track along which we now followed one another in single file, appeared formed by nature, and had been but little worn by the continued tread of horses for the last thousand years; for the eruption which has laid waste this plain occurred before the discovery of the island, and it is remarkable that no volcanic mountain is to be found in the immediate neighbourhood, so that the plain itself must have been in a state of combustion. The path is very tortuous, and descends into ravines

and hollows from fifty or sixty feet deep. At a sudden turn in the road, the roof of one of the houses of Havnifiord peeps out, and a large bay is discovered surrounded with lava, that gives shelter to the buildings clustered between it and the sea. When seen for the first time, this "Hraun," as it is called in Icelandic, has a most awful appearance, and the mind can hardly form a more terrible picture of a tract of country over which the arm of a destroying angel has been stretched. A deathlike silence reigns on all sides, only occasionally broken by the shrill note of the golden plover, and the frequent recurrence of beacons, points out to the stranger the inevitable fate that attends in winter the traveller who deviates but a few inches from the intricate path.

Four timber dwellings and several warehouses of the same materials, together with about forty or fifty Icelandic cottages, constitute the trading town of Havnifiord. The latter are universally distinguished from the houses of Danes by the

name of "Bai," and are little better than hovels constructed of turf and stones. Their owners live chiefly by fishing in the bay; an occupation in which, from the shelter afforded by the surrounding lava, they are seldom interrupted by bad weather. At a short distance these huts are scarcely distinguished from the ground they stand upon, and merely look like knolls where the grass has found enough soil to grow.

The arrival of the prince was greeted by a display of the national colours from each of the commercial establishments, and while he and his aides-de-camp were bidding adieu to the merchants, their wives brought in wine and chocolate, which are almost always offered to strangers on paying a visit. As we had still many miles to ride, we quitted Havnifiord after an hour's stay, and crossing the "Hraun" by another path, we entered a large circular space about half a mile in diameter, which had not been touched by the lava. It was, in fact, an oasis in the desert; no outlet was to be seen, and it

seemed that the liquid mass, in running towards it from every quarter, had been suddenly checked, and left this green spot to show what had been the state of the rest before the catastrophe had happened.

A narrow and almost invisible passage let us out of this meadow, and brought us, after a couple of miles, to Alftanes, a promontory covered with fishermen's huts. Among a few houses of a better sort, was to be marked that of the late Justitiarius of the Land's-over-Rett, or High Court, who had rendered his dwelling and the surrounding grounds as pleasant as the situation would allow. The principal object, however, at Alftanes is the school of Bessestad, which was removed to this place from Reikiavik about forty years ago. The house, formerly inhabited by the governors of Iceland, was, on their removing to their present residence, given up with the adjoining buildings to the teachers and students. The house, before its change of inhabitants, rejoiced in the high-

sounding name of Kongens Gaard, or King's Residence, and has large and lofty rooms, some of them painted with various designs, but altogether in a rather dilapidated state. The apartments on the ground-floor have been converted into lecture-rooms and refectories, and some chambers for the "Œconomus," who superintends the domestic arrangements of the institution. The garrets are fitted up as dormitories for the forty scholars, while the professors have houses provided for them at the back.

None of the scholars were there when we called, as the term only begins in October, and ends in May. The object of this division of the year is to give the youths an opportunity of returning home and assisting their parents in agricultural labours during the summer, and of employing that time in study when little more than fishing can be done. The expense of residing at the college during the eight months amounts to the trifling sum of thirty-three dollars and a third, and even this is, in many

cases, paid by the king. I do not believe that the number of scholars exceeds forty, nor is it likely that many more than that number would seek admission, as none but those intended for the church, or some judicial capacity, ever think of undergoing that which with them is looked upon as a sort of university education. Their studies consist in acquiring the Danish language, and a considerable knowledge of divinity, history, and the principles of astronomy. The classics also form a principal part of their pursuits; they are allowed to choose between Greek and Hebrew, in neither of which, I believe, they make any progress beyond the first elements; but all learn Latin, and to some more purpose than boys in England, for I never met with any one who had been brought up at Bessestad who could not in some way carry on a conversation in that tongue.

The church attached to the college is the largest in Iceland, and one of the only four that are built of stone. In form it is but a mere

oblong, with a tower at one end, which is the only thing that would prevent it being taken for a barn. The interior is filled with open seats, and has a glazed pew elevated in the form of a gallery, over the heads of the congregation, intended for the use of the governor, while attending divine service. On the left of the chancel the stone effigy of a governor of the seventeenth century, which had been lying many years in the entrance porch, has lately been restored by the *Œconomus*. The viceroy is represented about the size of life, in complete armour, bearing a two-handed sword; the execution is indifferent, and is probably foreign. The other ornaments are some wretched daubs of saints, painted on the panels of two shutters that cover the altar-piece; during prayers these are opened, and present the writhing countenances of a dozen men, in as many varieties of contortion. The pulpit has also its compartments ornamented with figures of apostles or evangelists, in the execution of which the artist has

carefully avoided a breach of the second commandment.

In the evening the governor, who was to leave the country, repeated his invitation to dinner, where I found a still larger party than the day before. On this occasion the prince made a long valedictory speech, and when the due quantity of champagne had been drunk, and the glasses had been sufficiently often clinked, the royal exile rose and proceeded to the beach, accompanied by his suite. The Esiuberg mountains on the opposite side of the bay of Reikiavik re-echoed, perhaps for the first time, with a salute; and, before the following morning, he was far from the Icelandic coast on his way to Fredericks, a small town of Jutland, of which he had been appointed governor.

CHAPTER II.

FIRST SETTLEMENT IN ICELAND.

Naddodr—Gardar—Ingolf—The reasons that made him emigrate—Supposed visits of Christian Irish to Iceland before Ingolf's time—The first settlers—Their manners—Dress—Commerce—Amusements.

THE history of Iceland can be traced, with certainty, up to the time of its discovery towards the end of the ninth century. It has had more historians than many countries of far greater population, and thanks to its remoteness from all others, and the absence of the wars which have destroyed so many records through-

out the rest of Europe, their works have been handed down to posterity unimpaired. They present to us a minute picture of the manners, during almost a thousand years, of a people, in whom we may behold all the characteristics of the Scandinavians, ferocity excepted, unchanged by either time or intercourse with other nations.

Secluded as this island is, by its position, from the rest of the world, we cannot expect to have our attention drawn to such stirring events as those which have occurred in the rest of Europe. The space, however, which in the annals of other nations is taken up with wars and revolutions, is, in theirs, filled by still more appalling misfortunes. The devastations of earthquakes followed by famine, form the principal features of their history. But they have a still higher claim on our sympathy:—our respect and admiration are due to a people who, surrounded by difficulties, and struggling with poverty, emerged from the barbarism

which then shrouded Europe; and though since fallen from their original state of independence, yet continue to maintain a character which would reflect credit on the most civilized nation.

Naddodr, a pirate of some celebrity, was the first person known to have landed in this country on a voyage from Norway to the Feroe Isles; he was driven, in A.D. 860, by tempestuous weather on the eastern coast, not far from a mountain called Riedarfiall. His account of this newly-discovered country, stated it to be entirely destitute of inhabitants, and covered with snow—whence he gave it its first name Snœland. A Swede named Gardar Sverison, hearing of this discovery, resolved to visit the new country; he touched on the eastern coast and continued his course to the north, he passed the winter of the year 864 in a bay of the northern district, called Skialfonda, and named the harbour Husavick from the houses which he had erected for his crew during their

sojourn. On his return home he changed the name of Snœland to Gardarsholm, or Gardar's isle, having been the first to circumnavigate it.

The reports of these adventurers having encouraged others to follow in their track, the next who directed his course that way was Floki Vilgerdason, also a pirate. Setting sail from a port in Norway named probably from himself Flokiwarda, he arrived at Shetland, at that time called Hiatland: his daughter Geirhilda who accompanied him, being lost in a swamp, he left that place, and steered towards Iceland: having no better way of keeping a right course he had taken some ravens with him from Hiatland, the first of these that he liberated returned to its home. After proceeding on his voyage for some time with a favourable wind he released another which hovered awhile above him and then settled on the yards. The third, however, which was freed when the voyage was more than half concluded, took its flight in the

direction of the island. Following in its track, Floki, like his predecessors, first got sight of land on the eastern coast. Shortly after he entered the bay between Reikianœs and Snœfelsnœs, a distance of twelve Icelandic miles. A Scottish sailor named Faxe whom he had on board pronounced this bay to be the estuary of a river; Floki to ridicule his ignorance called it Faxe-os, or Faxe's-mouth a name which it retains to the present day. Thence he passed on to Beidafroid, and wintered in Vatnsfiord in the Syssel of Bardastrand. During that period he supported his crew on fish, which abounded in the bay; on the coming of spring the weather did not abate in rigour, on the contrary the bay was soon filled with sea-ice, driven probably from Greenland; this circumstance caused a second change in the name of the island and induced Floki to give it the one it now bears, in consequence of finding his ship enclosed in the harbour, and every thing in sight bearing the same frozen appearance. The seve-

rity of the cold and the hardships which he underwent, do not, however, seem to have daunted him, for we find that he passed a second winter in the southern part of the island and at last returned to Norway, when in consequence of the use he had made of ravens on his voyage, he was surnamed Rafne Floki.

Such is the account given of the discovery of Iceland by the first three men who landed in it. They each represent it not only as a desert, but entirely without traces of any inhabitants, a condition however in which it was not destined to continue much longer. The state of Norway was undergoing a very material change, in consequence of the resolution that Harold Haafagre had formed of uniting the whole of that country under his sway. It is said that he was first incited to this desire of supreme dominion by the taunt of a princess who refused to accept his hand in marriage, while he remained a mere yarl, the title given to the numerous petty sovereigns of Norway.

Fired at this rebuff, Harold made a vow to leave his hair uncut, till he should have reduced the whole of the Yarls, and hence arose the name of Haarfagre, or Fair-haired, that was from that time applied to him. Justice to his neighbours was incompatible with the strict fulfilment of his vow; but the Norwegian did not allow any scruple to stand in the way of his wishes, his acts of aggression were such as to drive many of the weaker nobles from their country. It is to the civil war that was thus lighted up in Norway, and to the numerous expulsions consequent on it, that the rapid colonization of such a dreary country as Iceland is to be attributed; and it is also owing to the same causes that the first emigrants, far from being the dregs of their own nation, were chiefly from the noblest and most independent families in Norway. As the reason that induced the first settler, Ingolf, to seek a new home, arose from different circumstances, the account of it is dwelt upon more at large in the ancient Sagas.

Ingolf, the son of On, a Norwegian of noble extraction and distinguished valour, had a sister named Helga, who is represented as graced with exquisite beauty, and adorned with every virtue and accomplishment that the Scandinavians admired in the female character. This damsel was beloved by her cousin, Leif, more commonly known by the surname of Hiorleif, which he had acquired in Ireland from having taken the sword of one of its petty kings in battle. In the same part of Norway as Ingolf, and in habits of intimacy with him and Hiorleif, dwelt three youths, who rejoiced in the euphonous names of Hallstein, Holmstein, and Herstein. At one of those noisy feasts which, together with battles, furnished the Skalds with the principal subjects of their songs, the youngest of the three brothers raised the cup to his lips, and made a vow either to obtain the hand of Helga, or to forego marriage for the rest of his life. Ingolf, greatly irritated by this declaration, announced to the assembled guests his intention of withholding his sister's

portion unless she married her cousin. As the affair seemed to be taking a serious turn, Holmstein promised, if called upon, to be arbiter in the matter, and to enforce his decision if necessary; and upon the other parties assenting to this proposition, the meeting broke up.

Shortly afterwards, Helga was united to Hiorleif, and, as might be naturally expected, a deadly feud arose between the families of the rivals. Hostilities were commenced by the rejected suitor, who, attended by Holmstein, manned six ships and went in pursuit of Hiorleif. The latter was proceeding peaceably on a voyage, with only three unarmed vessels, when he was unexpectedly attacked, and, but for the timely interposition of some friends who fell in with him, he must have succumbed to the superior number of his foes. The new comers not only prevented the bridegroom from falling into the hands of his exasperated rival, but so far turned the scales in the conflict as to put to flight the aggressors, after slaying their leader.

Maddened by this defeat, and by the death of his brother, Holmstein determined on bringing the quarrel to an issue by attacking the other party at his own dwelling. The brothers-in-law, however, got scent of his intentions, and prepared themselves for resistance; and, consequently, the issue of this second enterprise ended as fatally to the aggressor as the first. His followers were repulsed, and he himself was left dead on the field. The surviving brother had abstained as yet from interference, and to him now, Hiorleif and Ingolf referred the arbitration of this dispute. His decision was, that Herstein had deservedly met with death for his treacherous attack, but he considered that his second brother was justified in revenging the death of the first, and for killing him he adjudged Ingolf and Hiorleif to leave Norway. They at once submitted, not so much through fear of Hallstein, as from the apprehension that Harold Haafagre might interfere, and be less lenient in his judgment. Accord-

ingly, after turning their landed and other property into money, they sailed for Iceland without their families. The two exiles first landed there in 870; and, having made all necessary arrangements, they returned at the end of four years, and carried away from Norway their wives, families, and property. When in sight of land Ingolf threw overboard the doorposts of his late Norwegian dwelling, in compliance with a custom which appears to have prevailed at that period. The settlers noticed in the Sagas, are frequently recorded to have selected for their future residence, the spot upon which their Penates were washed ashore. Though Ingolf-hofda, the most southern extremity of the land, was the first point made, the posts having floated away in a westerly direction, Ingolf steered the same course, and after a tedious search of three years, discovered them at the place now called Reikiavik, where he finally fixed his habitation.

Hiorleif following the example of his friend,

as regarded his choice of a location, settled at Hiorleif-hofda, and constructed there, two considerable edifices, in which he spent the short remaining period of his life. At the end of the first year's settlement, while sowing the land about his house, he was murdered by some Irishmen, his slaves, whom he had threatened with punishment for destroying his horse. These men, after putting his adherents as well as himself to death, fled with the wives of the slain to some small isles which lie to the south of Iceland, and have thence been called Westmanna Eyar, Westman being the name used by the Norwegians, to distinguish the inhabitants of the British isles from the people who bordered on the Baltic. The news of the massacre soon reached Ingolf, and the delinquents, after a smart pursuit, were to a man destroyed by him.

The first settlers found the country so completely covered with woods, that they were obliged to cut their way through them with

axes, and clear the ground intended for tillage, in the same way as is now practised in North America. The height of the trees is not mentioned, but they must have far surpassed those of the present day; as any thing that now bears the name of a forest, in Iceland, would offer but little impediment to the traveller. The stunted birch near Efstadal, is more like copse than timber, and I have been informed will not grow to the height of three or four feet in less than forty years. Yet the great quantities of turf every where to be met with, and the account of Hiorleif's sowing grain, would argue that in earlier ages, the climate was more genial than at present.

Though Ingolf found no inhabitants, it is certain that some mariners had touched there, probably without making a long stay; for crosses and other symbols of the Christian religion, were found in the south. The owners of these articles are supposed to have been Irish fishermen who were already converted, and were

called by heathen Norwegians, "Papæ." This fact is the only one that would plead for the truth of the assertion of Geoffrey of Monmouth, who relates that King Arthur subdued Iceland. This event is stated to have taken place in the year 516; and in another book of travels, probably equally veracious, a British king named Malgo, is said to have recovered Iceland, which it asserts had been before reduced by Arthur. Both these accounts are so clearly fabulous, as hardly to call for refutation. The Icelandic Sagas are explicit in their relation of the time and manner of the colonisation of the island, and very soon after the arrival of the first settlers, a book called "Landnamma Bok" was drawn up, which contained every particular that regarded the original proprietors of the soil.

For the first fifty years after Ingolf's arrival the distance between the different families was such, as to make each an independent community; nor was it till the close of that period that the want was felt of a bond of union and

of national institutions. Their settlements were not formed in towns: their mode of living would not have admitted of that way of locating themselves. Relying for sustenance in this new land on the produce of the earth, each man fixed on a spot removed from his neighbour, and the apparent richness of the soil, or the advantages of contiguous rivers and springs were the principal inducements in the choice of a home.

From the account of Arngrim Jonas, in his "Crymogœa," the way of living was in many respects the same in the first era of the island as among their descendants of the present day. Their houses were built either of sods alone, or of alternate layers of stone and turf. This mode was adopted as calculated to exclude external frost more effectually than timber. The windows were more generally placed in the roof than the walls; and the roof itself was covered with earth, and yearly clothed in grass. The timber used in the construction of the

beams, rafters, and other woodwork, was either of native growth, or washed on shore by the tide. The farm offices were separate, though contiguous to the dwelling-house, the stables formed an outer circle to the mass of building, and the general stores were placed in isolated spots for fear of fire.

Though the greater number of houses were of a very humble description, in many cases a rude magnificence was exhibited in fitting up the interior; mention is made of ceilings and panels carved with representations of historical events, and in size some of the mansions of the richer people were by no means inconsiderable, if we are to judge by the account of the houses of Hiorleif and others. The ground around the house was generally enclosed, and reserved for pasture.

Their customary drink was whey, and they added to it a kind of porridge rendered more palatable by the admixture of honey, and the juice of small blue berries. With the use

of malt liquors, they were not unacquainted, from their continual intercourse with Europe. After enumerating the above articles, which, with fish and mutton, formed their whole diet, Arngrim states his conviction that if his early countrymen were not addicted to luxury or gluttony, their temperance is not to be attributed to their inability to indulge in these vices, but to their judgment and innate good qualities. He declares that there was no deficiency of entertainments among them, nor were these wanting in splendour, either as regards the number of the guests, or the length of time the feasts lasted. Thorar and Thorald, two brothers in the north, entertained at their father's funeral 1200 men for fourteen days, of whom none departed without presents. Another instance of the same ostentatious liberality is given by him in the case of Olavr Pà, an inhabitant of the western province, who, with his two brothers, feasted nine hundred for a fortnight. Both these banquets were given at the

private expense of individuals, and without producing any inconvenient effects on the fortunes of the donors.

On common occasions, the dress of the ancient Icelanders was of native manufacture of wool, spun and woven by their wives and slaves. The richer class sometimes added a coat or cloak of foreign cloth ; the linen for the dress of the women was imported, though, as Arngrim remarks, it was unadorned with the bright colours which were prevalent in his own days. At a later period, he continues, when the age had degenerated from the ancient frugality which characterizes the early inhabitants, it was found necessary to pass a sumptuary law with regard to dress, and to restrain the passion for inordinate display, which was making rapid progress through the land.

There is no appearance of their having made use of coins: the general practice of bartering goods made it unnecessary to have recourse to money in their commercial transactions. Silver,

however, was common, and its value reckoned by its weight; rings also and bracelets were employed, chiefly as remembrances from superiors to private individuals, and from friend to friend.

In exercises and amusements, the present generation is, no doubt, very inferior to their forefathers. In former times, before poverty had struck them, various were the sports which kept up the spirit of their youth and developed the powers of the body. Among them was wrestling, perhaps the only one which has lasted to the present day. They had also hurling-matches, and archery; and slinging was not neglected; but the most exciting amusement was the "hestaweg," in which the parties contended on horseback; wounds and even death frequently occurred in this pastime; and when foul play was suspected, it was not uncommon for them to fight in earnest, and for the majority to leave their lives in the field.

CHAPTER III.

INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY.

A code of laws introduced—The form of government—adopted—The Hrepp—The Thing—Religious ceremonies—Human sacrifices—The courts—The Laugmadr — Althing — Laws — Ordeal — Exposition of Infants — Bersekir — Discovery of Greenland — Of America—Introduction of Christianity.

ABOUT fifty-six years after Ingolf's arrival, the population had so much increased that it was considered necessary to form a regular government. In 928, Ufliot, who had two years before brought over a book of Norwegian laws,

proposed that a selection should be made of such statutes as were applicable to their infant colony. At a public meeting "Thorlief, hin spake," or "the wise," was requested to compile a code, with the assistance of some other chiefs; he complied with the demand, and gleaned from the Norwegian laws whatever he judged to be serviceable to Iceland.

The new form of government given to the country was that of an aristocratic republic. The island was divided into four provinces, called after the cardinal points of the compass. These were again subdivided, each into three districts, with the exception of the northern province, which, on account of its superior size, was divided into four parts. These were again subdivided into portions called "Hreppar," a term which in many respects is analogous to our hundred; ten of them were generally contained in one district, though the number varied.

The Hrepp was inhabited by at least ten

farmers, each in possession of a fixed value of property. In each of the districts was a court of justice called "Thing," which was also consecrated to religious uses, and was built with considerable magnificence for the country it was in. Two of these edifices were 120 feet long, the one in Wassdall in the northern province, the other at Kialarnes in the southern, and the latter was also sixty feet in breadth.—Attached to each "Thing," was a temple which was considered most sacred, and contained the statues of their gods, elevated on pedestals and surrounded with sheep reserved for sacrifice. Thor, the principal idol, occupied the centre, and was supported on either side by Freyer, Niordr, and As, and many inferior deities, whose numbers are uncertain ; as, however, the names of the three last only occur in the ancient form of oath, it is probable that As, who is supposed to be Odin, and his two children Freyer and Niordr, were the only gods in much consideration. Before the pedestal of the chief figure

stood an altar called "wiigdann," covered with iron, on which a fire was kept burning; in the centre of it a large caldron of bronze received the blood of the victims, and served for sprinkling the bystanders. A silver ring of the weight of twenty ounces, lay on the altar, for persons to hold while taking an oath, after it had been dipped in the blood in the caldron.

The victims in general were quadrupeds, though the priests did not consider that their gods could be propitiated at so easy a rate; at Kialarnes, human beings were the peace-offerings which were presented to their idols. The unfortunate sufferers were plunged headlong into a deep well, called the "blodkelda," that was dug before the doors of the temple. In Thornes Thing, in Westland a different, but equally horrible, mode of sacrifice was adopted: the human victims were dashed to pieces against a large stone that stood in the middle of the court. After the abolition of heathen rites such a horror was felt at these acts of barbarity, that

the stone was said to have retained the colour of blood though washed by the rain of many centuries.

This abominable practice does not appear to have lasted long in Iceland, or to have prevailed in any places except those just named ; neither were these acts approved of by the majority. From the first, many of the settlers, though brought up in heathenism in Norway, showed a decided aversion to the worship of idols ; and one went so far as to burn down a temple at Esiuberg, and destroy all the idols that were in it ; an act that was resented by the pagans, whose first work was to rebuild the scene of their iniquities.

To return to the division of the country under its new constitution, the " Hrepps," were under the care of officers called Hreppstiores, whose qualifications were reputed integrity and possession of immovable property. They had the charge of the poor, and it was their duty not only to relieve the indigent, but to guard against

others falling into the like difficulties. In order to effect this, not only very severe laws were enacted against persons who attempted to get themselves supported by the labours of the industrious part of the community ; but as a further preventive against pauperism, the settlement of a new comer in a Hrepp required the sanction of its inhabitants, who might reject a person likely to be a burden to the society, or convicted of a crime. Losses by fire were ascertained by an inquisition, and half the damage incurred by the sufferer made good to him by a levy on the inhabitants of the Hrepp. In like manner a man, who lost a fourth of his flock by pestilence, had the same relief extended to him ; but in neither case was this claim allowed to be repeated more than three times, nor was the loss of treasure compensated for at all.

An inferior court was held by the Hreppstjore to which the people were summoned by the hammer of Thor being sent round by each to his nearest neighbour ; a symbol which, after the

introduction of Christianity, was changed for a wooden cross. The magistrate immediately above them, who presided over the thirteen districts, also made use of emblems to announce extraordinary meetings. They varied according to the nature of the business to be transacted; such as a spear when an inquest was to be held on a dead body; or a wooden axe, when the taxes were to be collected; and they were known by the general name of "bod," or summons.

The superior magistrate was called Laug-madr, or law-man; and it was his duty to enforce and interpret the laws, and to preside also at the general court of the whole island, called the Althing. At first it was held at Armansfell, in the south, and was after a time removed to Thing-valla, where it continued till the year 1800. During Iceland's independence this species of parliament—for it not only employed itself in the decision of grave cases, reserved for its consideration, but also in the

enactment of new laws—met yearly about the middle of May, and continued its deliberations for fourteen days. No building was used on the occasion, and people, who flocked from all quarters, merely pitched their tents on the banks of the Oxeraa, and carried on their discussions in the open air. The meeting of the Althing was also the time when capital punishments were inflicted on delinquents; the men being decapitated on a small island in the river, and the women drowned in a deep pool close by, after an hour's exposure to the view of the assembled multitude. The latter peculiar punishment seems to have been general among the northern nations, as we find in Tacitus, that death was inflicted on cowards in Germany, by drowning them with a hurdle over the head.

The form of government was essentially aristocratic in all its details, and in many respects resembled that of the Saxons. The laws, which in some cases, particularly such as regarded the chastity of women, were very severe, allowed

murder to be compensated for by a fine payable to the relatives of the deceased ; thus, while adultery was visited with death, one, or at most three hundred ounces of silver were considered an equivalent for the life of a freeman.

In cases where there was not sufficient evidence to convict a suspected person of a crime, a kind of ordeal was resorted to, which, though not as terrible as that by fire among our ancestors, was equally absurd. It consisted in the prisoners passing under a strip of turf, placed in the form of an arch, without any prop to keep it in that position. If the turf remained unmoved during his transit, his evidence in his own favour was credited ; but did it fall in, his guilt was considered substantiated, and his doom was irrevocably fixed. In making a solemn agreement, a similar ceremony took place ; the contracting parties stood under the turf, which in this case was supported by a spear, and mingled together a quantity of blood drawn from the bodies of each, and by

this act bound themselves, besides assisting their companions during life, in case of surviving them, to do their utmost to revenge their deaths.

Many other barbarous customs are frequently noticed in the Sagas, which had evidently been brought over from Norway, and ceased to exist when the mild spirit of Christianity was diffused among them. Of these none was perhaps more horrible than the practice of destroying their children, when the inconvenience of bringing them up, or the whim of the moment, tempted a father to reject his offspring. An instance of this custom is to be found in the Landnama bok, which, though partly fabulous, gives us a notion of what common occurrence it must have been. Thoracta having been delivered of a child, her husband, Asgrim, without any further remark, ordered it to be killed; while the slave, who was to execute his command, was digging a hole for its grave, the child, says the legend, who was

lying on the floor, sung the following lines to him :

“Lättit mic til mðder
Mèr er kalt à gòlf
Hvar man svennin sæmri
En a sins fòdurs aimum
Tharf eigi jàrn at eggia,
Ne jardarmen skerda ;
Lettit leoto verki.
Lifa man ek med mannon.”—*Land v. cap. 6.*

“Take me to my mother ! I am cold upon the floor ! where is a boy more seemly than in his father’s arms ? You need not sharpen steel, or cut up the turf ; leave your loathsome work ; it is fate for me to live among men.”

The appeal was not, it appears, fruitless, for the boy was taken up by his father, and in the sequel became a distinguished hero.

Another feature which brutalized many of their principal warriors was that of habituating themselves to give way to passion, till it became a disease over which they had no control. On

such occasions they were like maniacs in the highest state of phrensy; their force was irresistible, and they slew alike friend and foe. Stripping themselves to the skin, they would attack armed men, and seize their weapons with their teeth; but on the passing away of the fit, this supernatural strength was followed by a languor that placed them completely at the mercy of the merest child. This class of persons at one time was numerous, and known by the name of Berserkir; they, however, gradually disappeared after the eleventh century, when society would no longer tolerate their outrages.

Such were the manners of this people nearly a thousand years ago; manners from which they have changed but in a trifling degree, and to which they cling as much as is in their power. The principal difference in the country, at the former and present period, consists in the number of powerful men in the old times; whereas now an almost perfect equality of rank

and fortune reigns throughout. This, perhaps, may be explained by the number of Throel or slaves that they owned, the possession of whom obviated the necessity of the freemen tilling the land themselves, and gave them the opportunity of attending to other pursuits. Commerce, in particular, occupied many of them, and that considerable energy was displayed in their maritime affairs is apparent by the discovery that they made, at the close of the twelfth century, of two countries at that time unknown to the rest of the world.

Erick Raude, in 982, discovered Greenland, and left there some of his people, who formed a settlement of considerable extent; for his son Hans was sent by Olaus Tryggesser, King of Norway to convert the inhabitants. The colony was afterwards formed into a diocese, and besides three monasteries, contained twelve parish churches, and two hundred and ninety villages. This flourishing state of things

continued till 1466, when the last bishop was sent over; from that time the ice began to collect along the eastern coast to such an extent that no ships have been since able to approach it, and the fate of the whole colony has remained a mystery to this day.

The second discovery to which the Icelanders lay claim, is no less than that of North America. A few years after the discovery of Greenland, one Biorn Heriolson was driven westward, on a voyage to that land, and proceeding in a south-westerly direction, reached a country to which he gave the name of Vinland from the wild grapes which he found there. Several other mariners went there afterwards, the last of whom, after a stay of three years, was killed by the natives, who were known to the Icelanders by the name of Skrœlingers.

Finnur Johnson, Bishop of Skálholt, is of opinion, in his Ecclesiastical History, that this country must either have been Virginia itself, or in the same latitude, for the shortest winter

days were about nine hours long, and the productions of the earth such as belong to that country. Another passage, which seems to refers to America, is to be found in the Land-nama Bok, where Air is mentioned to have sailed to Vinland, that lies in the Western Ocean, six days' sail from Ireland. Both these accounts appear improbable; yet no great difficulty was to be encountered by these islanders in reaching America, as they were already half way across the ocean.

About the same time as these discoveries, a change took place in Iceland by the introduction of Christianity, which was begun in 982, and completed within eighteen years of that date. It was originally owing to one Thoraldur, who brought over a Saxon named Frederic; after preaching for four years with little success they retired to Constantinople, and left the work to be completed by Olaus, king of Norway. This prince, elated with his success in converting his own subjects, and the inhabi-

tants of the Feroe isles, sent over several missionaries, and wrought a considerable change in the people.

The new religion preached among them had called the attention of all to it, and as opinions were much divided on the subject, it was resolved that the discussion should be referred to the Althing at its next meeting. The missionaries of Olaus were allowed to plead in favour of their tenets, but while yet speaking, were interrupted by the news that the Yokuls, to the east of Thingvalle, were in a state of eruption, and had already covered the surrounding country with flames and destruction. This event was considered as a judgment of the higher powers, and the Pagans at once exclaimed, that it was no wonder that the indignation of their gods was excited by the new religion which it was attempted to introduce. But they were quickly answered by Snorro Godi, a priest, who retorted by asking them what had called down the anger of the gods when the very rock upon

which they stood, had been reduced to a molten mass by subterraneous fire ?

The sight of the surrounding scenery, where every thing that is terrible and sublime are combined, the tremendous effects of volcanic fire which appeared on every side, and lastly the reflection that this eruption had taken place prior to the arrival of Ingolf, had an immediate effect on the assembly.

At the same time the eloquence of the Laugmadr Thorgeir, who vigorously advocated the cause of Christianity, came to its support, and turned the tide in favour of the proposed change.

Fifty six years after, Isleif, the son of one of the missionaries, was appointed bishop of Skálholt, and having journeyed to Rome, was duly consecrated by the Pope. In 1106 the want of a second bishop being felt, Holum, in the northern province, was erected into an episcopal see.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MISFORTUNES OF ICELAND.

Early attempts of the Kings of Norway to gain possession of Iceland—The voluntary surrendering of the island—The consequences of it—Saarti Daudi—Eruptions—The Reformation—The last great volcanic eruption in 1783—Jorgensen's revolution in 1809.

THE eleventh and twelfth centuries passed over Iceland without producing much change either in its government or the manners of its inhabitants. Men of learning, at least for those ages, contributed to acquire for these islanders

a reputation in the north of Europe, which has not even yet altogether passed away. Added to this they were so famous for their poetry, that they were always welcome guests at the court of Norway and Sweden, where it was believed that there was a kind of magic hidden in their verses, whereby they could summon the demons from the infernal regions. Gradually the aristocratic kind of government under which they had thrived degenerated into the worst species of oligarchy, and dissension took the place of order and quiet. A few powerful men aspired to the supreme command; the laws fell into contempt; and violence, rapine and sedition kindled a civil war among them. Such errors can seldom be committed without punishment and that incurred by Iceland was great, for it amounted to no less than the loss of its independence.

Not long after the departure of the first fugitives, Harold Haarfagre perceived the inconvenience of an independant people rising up

from among his subjects ; he therefore attempted to check the emigration, by imposing a fine upon all who quitted Norway with that intention. Failing in this, he had recourse to more violent measures, and determined on making himself master of the island. To accomplish this he brought into his views Uni, the son of Gardar, above mentioned, and promised him the hereditary government of Iceland if he should succeed in gaining possession of it. The Swede agreed to take the command of the enterprise, and considering that stratagem would be more likely to prevail than open violence, took only twelve men, and put on the mask of friendship, intending to assassinate the chieftains, and gradually make a diversion in his own favour. He landed on the southern coast and mixed with the inhabitants ; but failing to prevent suspicions of his conduct, they put him and his comrades to death, before he had had time to enter upon the execution of his plans.

The thoughts of Saint Olaus were too much taken up with their spiritual condition, to give him time to militate against their political interests; but his successor, Olaus the Fat, also surnamed the Holy, from some miracles attributed to him, followed up the intentions of Harold. Avoiding the errors of that king, he tried milder measures, and sent over ambassadors with presents, proposing to the Icelanders that they should acknowledge his superiority, and rely on him for assistance. This after being rejected, he begged of them to give up to him a small island on the northern coast, called Grimsey. They were on the point of falling into the snare laid for them, but were prevented by Einar of Threera, who remonstrated on the folly of complying with the king's request, and showed them the dangerous consequences of such a concession. Exasperated at this second repulse, Olaus imprisoned the Icelanders whom he had at his court, and was meditating on proceeding to still further lengths, when his life, as

well as his iniquitous designs, were put an end to by intestine seditions.

Similar, though not such open, aggressions were made by his half-brother, Harold the Cruel, which met with no better success; the country, however, by the middle of the thirteenth century, had been reduced to the state that is adverted to in the beginning of the chapter. Owing to these deplorable disorders, the king of Norway, Hagen, gained what his predecessors had so much thirsted after: for it became apparent to the natives, that no more expeditious or certain way was to be found of restoring public tranquillity, than by subjecting the aristocracy, as well as the people, to a power able to coerce and punish their intemperance. Three of the provinces, therefore, agreed, in 1261, to recognise the king of Norway upon certain conditions; and the eastern part, which at first resisted the proposition, gave its consent three years later.

By the conditions of cession it was stipulated,

that the ancient laws should remain in force. The Icelanders were to be on a footing with the Norwegians, and, furthermore, were not to be bound by any oath of allegiance to the king, unless their privileges were maintained inviolate. The act of surrendering had the desired effect: tranquillity was restored, the laws were again put in force, and the evils which had overwhelmed the country disappeared. The change was, nevertheless, dearly bought: with their independence disappeared a great portion of the enterprise that had marked the character of their ancestors. Being no longer called upon to attend themselves to their national welfare, their energies became palsied; they returned to a state of pupilage, and instead of directing their affairs, their only duty became obedience to those set over them, and reliance on the exertions of others in their behalf. Forming an insignificant province, though never treated with tyranny, they were often neglected: from this period, therefore, their history is a mere blank—

chequered, unfortunately, but too often with calamities brought on by their climate and the volcanic nature of their soil.

The century that immediately followed the loss of their independence was particularly memorable for these visitations. In the course of the first forty years no less than six series of eruptions destroyed their cattle, swept away their habitations, and rendered a great part of the land, hitherto useful, unavailable for pasture; and when, in 1387, by the crown of Norway coming into the hands of Margaret, the Semiramis of the North, Iceland became part of the Danish dominions, the change of masters brought no change of condition with it to the country. The reign of the new dynasty was ushered in by the appearance of a pestilence so deadly as to obtain for it the name of "Suarti Daudi," or Black Death. Before its ravages had subsided, two-thirds of the inhabitants had fallen victims to its virulence, leaving their survivors to feel the following year the additional

misery of famine, as the disease that had before attacked human beings transferred itself to the cattle, and carried the greater part away.

It is not to be wondered at, that in the midst of such a complication of evils, this unfortunate people sunk rapidly, and that the learning for which it had been remarkable, disappeared from among them ; it is rather astonishing, that overwhelmed as they were on every side (for in addition to other miseries their coasts were at this time infested with English and Irish pirates), they bore up and preserved those few remnants of literature which after the Reformation were partially revived. The very tone of their writers partakes of the gloominess which pervaded their country ; and the simple recital of their woes is made in the words of men whose spirit is broken down, and who have been so long accustomed to misfortune as to despair of any change for the better.

The Reformation which was spreading in the north of Europe found its way to Iceland ;

not, however, without bringing with it troubles and dissensions. The two bishops of Holum and Skálholt taking different sides, these two prelates commenced hostilities against each other, which ended in the beheading the one who adhered to the Pope, and in the adoption of the Lutheran creed, which is to this day the only one known in the land. A new spring was also given to learning by the foundation of two schools at the sees of the bishops, which owed their origin to Christian III. Both were afterwards united, and are at present represented by the school of Bessestad.

The reader must be wearied with the recapitulation of horrors which follow close on one another, without one incident to dissipate the gloom that covers the whole narration ; and it is a relief to approach near to our own time, and feel that the recapitulation is coming to a close. The last century, however, seems to have concentrated the horrors of all the preceding ones ; and has, perhaps, been altogether the most

terrible that has passed over Iceland. In 1707 the smallpox found its way into the island, and, out of a population of 47,000, swept 16,000 into the grave in one year! In 1759, after a succession of inclement years, the almost entire loss of their cattle brought on a famine, and another gap was made in the numbers of the people, who were barely recovered from their last scourge. Starvation succeeded disease, and 10,000 fell victims to this second visitation. The third and greatest calamity, was the unparalleled eruption of several volcanoes in 1783. The waters of the river Skaptaa were suddenly dried up, and a torrent of liquid fire rolled in their stead. This was followed soon after by other streams of lava, that came down with such rapidity as to drive the inhabitants from their houses: frequent earthquakes were felt; and a phenomenon, not before witnessed in such cases, appeared in the form of a dense cloud, that covered the whole island, and involved it in total darkness. The consequences

were terrible; the air became infected: the ground covered with volcanic ashes, produced grass that poisoned the cattle that fed on it. The inhabitants of the country near Skaptaa Jokul were attacked with an epidemic of a putrid nature; the loss of cattle brought on a famine; and, to crown the whole, the smallpox made its appearance a second time. Assistance was sent them from Denmark, and every attempt was made to arrest the ravages of the disease; but all that could be devised could not prevent one quarter of the population being carried off by this complication of ills.

Since that period no physical revolution has disturbed the tranquillity of Iceland; the volcanoes have ceased from their labours, and, with the exception of one that emitted smoke about six or seven years ago, have remained in a quiescent state.

Little more remains to be told; and were it not for a laughable occurrence that took place in 1809, this brief sketch might close here; as,

however, the melancholy greatly preponderates over the ludicrous in every thing that regards this country, it would be unfair to omit any thing that has a portion of the latter in it. In the month of January, in the above-mentioned year, the people of Reikiavik were struck with the unexpected arrival of a ship in the depth of winter. On entering the harbour she hoisted American colours, the United States being neutral; but, upon a representation being made that no foreign vessel was allowed to trade with

out of the war with Denmark, he returned to his native country, and took the command of a privateer, but had the ill-luck, in the early part of his new career, to be captured by the Swan frigate. While on parole in London, he met with Phelps, and represented the advantage of entering upon the Icelandic trade while the Danes were excluded from it by the British cruisers that hovered about the entrance of the Cattegat. The soap-boiler was tempted by what he heard, and dispatched his new acquaintance with a cargo, and with him sent a half-French, half-English sort of character, named Savignac, as supercargo, to whose bad conduct much of the evil that followed has been attributed.

Upon their arrival, the governor interdicted all dealings with the English, and Jorgensen, finding it of no use to attempt any at that time, discharged his cargo, and returned in ballast, leaving Savignac behind him. Phelps was not discouraged by this misfortune, but pro-

ceeded to fit out another vessel, called the *Margaret and Anne*, and provided himself with a letter of marque. He determined on going himself this time, and set sail with twelve guns prepared for hostilities, should they suit his views. On his arrival he seized a Danish vessel, called the *Orion*, in virtue of a letter of marque. Savignac, also, gave his employer to understand that the governor had offered a reward for Mr. Phelps's head. Upon hearing this, the merchant ordered his captain to seize the person of the governor, who was accordingly arrested on a Sunday afternoon, as the people were coming from church, and put on board the *Margaret and Anne*, where he was kept in strict confinement.

Jorgensen, who had hitherto been quiet, now came forward, and seized upon the reins of government. He began by issuing a proclamation, by which he declared Iceland an independent republic, to be placed under the protection of Great Britain, and decided upon three

white stockfish upon a blue ground for its flag. He also undertook to put the country in a state of defence, and to restore the ancient form of government; but as these changes would require some time to effect, he took upon himself the labour of ruling the land, until such time as the constitution should be sufficiently established to work without his aid; and he satisfied himself with taking the modest titles of Protector of Iceland and Commander by Sea and Land.

As he felt the utility of pecuniary resources, he declared all the property belonging to Danes forfeited to the state; and in order to render himself popular with the natives, he sold them the grain belonging to the former at half price. Among other means that he took to turn the trade into the hands of his employers, and to prevent any attempt at resistance, he ordered all the Danes to give up their arms, and forbade them, under pain of instant death, to stir out of their houses. Backed by the guns of

the Margaret and Anne, which could blow up the town and its inhabitants in less than half an hour, Jorgensen was too formidable to be resisted by the Danes, who were, besides, dispirited by the loss of their governor, and he quietly took possession and installed himself in the dwelling of the latter.

Having now formed a body-guard, from some thieves that he picked up and rigged out as soldiers, he set about his changes, turning out one magistrate, imprisoning another, and plundering Danes wherever he had an opportunity. To redeem his promise of putting the island in a state of defence, he caused six rusty guns to be dragged from Bessestad, where they had lain for near two hundred years, and with them mounted a battery for the protection of the town. The wool that was purchased by Phelps during the summer, was put up in bales so as to form a breastwork, and as military an appearance as possible was given to the whole.

It is uncertain how far he would have carried

his plans into execution, had he met with no foreign obstacle. It has been said that he was backed by some influential Icelanders, who preferred the English to the Danish government, and, no doubt, the prudence of many of his orders indicate, that he was directed by persons who were well acquainted with every detail relative to the country. The people, however, were too dispersed and too unaccustomed to agitation to take a warm part in the revolution, and Jorgensen was too regardless of private rights not to make many enemies. Though he must have fallen of himself, his usurpation was put an end to by a much more powerful engine.

While he was playing the dictator at Reikiavik, and amusing himself with tormenting the Danes, the Talbot sloop of war, under the command of the Honourable Alexander Jones, entered the port of Havnifjord, and received information of what was going on at the capital: the captain immediately went there, and seeing the new flag waving over the town,

ordered it to be taken down, and the Danish colours substituted. The battery, too, was destroyed. The governor having desired to be taken to England, to represent what had happened to the English government, Captain Jones appointed the two next officers in rank, named Stephenson, to govern in his absence.

As for Jorgensen, the captain insisted upon his going to England, as he had broken his parole. The Margaret and Anne sailed with the best cargo that ever left Iceland: but, before she lost sight of land, she was discovered to be on fire; and the crew were only rescued by Jorgensen coming up to them in the prize Orion. The fire was attributed to the Danish prisoners; but, there is every reason to believe that it arose from the wool, that had been used for the battery, having been put on board wet, and consequently ignited. Jorgensen, on his return, was put in confinement, and having committed two felonies, was transported to

Botany Bay : and Phelps, unable to recover the loss of his ship, became a bankrupt.

Thus ended this singular business : and after the departure of the Talbot, the affairs of the isle again took their usual course, and no evil consequences arose from this attempted revolution, except the losses by a few individuals who had been plundered under the plea of " Universal Good." Since that time the people, who were subject to many privations during the war, have been reaping the advantages of peace, and have been blessed with milder seasons than had been usual. The consequence has been increase of comforts throughout the land ; and it is to be hoped that their present improved condition may not make them neglectful, or forget that such visitations, as have been here enumerated, may occur again, and overwhelm them with even greater misery.

CHAPTER V.

Winter in Reikiavik—Living among the natives—Town of Reikiavik.

THE departure of the corvette left me alone to look about me, and make my arrangements for the winter. The chief disadvantage that I laboured under was my ignorance of both Danish and Icelandic, both of which are spoken in Reikiavik, and I soon found that English, with one or two exceptions, was unknown. My only plan was, therefore, to make myself as quickly as possible acquainted with Danish,

which I understood was by far the easiest of the two tongues ; and with this view I took my meals with a Sysselman of a neighbouring district, who was obliged to remain at Reikiavik during the winter. My new messmate was a clever lively man, possibly well imbued with a sense of the dignity of a Sysselman, and desirous that others might have the same feeling, but on the whole an entertaining companion. Our conversation was at first carried on in Latin, and from daily exercise we soon lost the difficulty we felt in expressing ourselves. Some embarrassment was also occasioned by our different pronounciation, the Icelanders adopting that of the Italians. It was not long, however, before we left off the learned language, and, by mutual consent, exchanged it for the Danish, to which we both stuck during the remainder of our acquaintance.

It will be easily believed that our meals exhibited no great luxury, either as regarded the materials or the cooking ; yet on the whole,

for the two first months our fare was as good as might be expected in any other part of the North of Europe. As the winter, however, advanced, a great falling off in the victualling department took place. Fresh meat gradually disappeared ; smoked mutton, that raised blisters on the tongue, was substituted ; and the daily repetition of cod-fish, without any sauce but the water it was boiled in, gave a very insipid character to our ordinary dinner. Occasionally, salt salmon, or a piece of veal, from a calf slaughtered a few hours after its birth, was added ; but in general such delicacies were reserved for high days.

Even this was far superior to the ordinary living of the natives ; their diet, of course, may be supposed to correspond with the poverty of their dwellings and the general simplicity of their lives. Dried cod-fish, prepared without salt, is the principal article of subsistence of the mass of the people ; it, in fact, is the substitute for bread, which they seldom taste, and is

eaten raw, with butter spread upon it, after undergoing a sufficient pounding with a heavy stone mallet, to shiver it into thin shreds. In this state it is, by no means, unpalatable by itself; and, were fresh or salted substituted for the rancid butter which is always used, there would be nothing to object to this kind of food.

Their preference to stale over salted butter one must attribute to salt being an imported article, and a luxury to be attained, in the interior, only by a few. However this may be, salt is very little used even in the preservation of their meat, the mutton being always smoked for winter, and the fish merely split and dried in the sun. Though bread itself is not eaten out of Reikiavik, rye gruel, forms one meal in the day, and flat cakes of the same grain are occasionally to be met with. Windmills are scarce; probably the two best are at Kieblivik and Reikiavik, and as water power is nowhere resorted to, though the waterfalls and rapids every where offer great hydraulic advantages,

the farmers are contented to stick to the primitive mode of grinding their corn in handmills, called by them "quern," though the labour and time expended in the process is far greater, and, after all, inadequately performed.

The little use of vegetables made by the Icelanders, and the necessity they labour under of confining themselves to animal food, produces many cutaneous diseases, that, from neglect in the first instance, often become very terrible in their consequences. The few vegetables that they use are at best but stunted pigmies of their kind, and are besides very scarce, seeds seldom finding their way into the interior from the ports. The almost only native vegetable dish that they indulge in, is a sort of gruel prepared from the lichen called "Fiall grass," or mountain grass (*Lichen Icelandicus*), that in some respects resembles the dandelion, having brownish-green leaves, with jagged edges. It is found in great plenty in the valleys, and as it abounds in mucilage, it is made into a very palatable soup

by the addition of cream and sugar, after being boiled in several waters, to extract its bitterness.

But the article of food that is most prized, is the flesh of the "Haukall," a species of dog-fish or shark, that abounds on the coast of Iceland. Before it is fit for use it must have been buried for a couple of years in the sand; when arrived at a state of maturity by this inhumation, it is said to resemble pork in flavour, but is so offensive as to render it impossible to approach a person who has tasted the least morsel of it for three weeks before. This, however, is not considered a sufficient reason for rejecting it, and I may say that, on the whole, they display as great a love of *haut gout* as any aldermanic epicure; whether reindeer's meat or skait engross their attention, a few weeks' wind-drying is all that is considered necessary to either. If it were not ill-natured, they might also be accused of eating horseflesh, though it is but justice to say that the preference shown to the

latter food is confined to certain places, and has gained for these persons the name of "Hross eiter," or horse eaters, which is looked upon as a term of special reproach.

Our mess, however, was never reduced to such extremities, though for a time we were deprived even of potatoes, which did not make their reappearance at our table till the arrival of a postship. Five or six times during the winter a bullock was brought to the town, and bought by one or other of the merchants, who sent a notice of this extraordinary occurrence round the place, that each might write down what quantity he wished to have reserved for him. The beef was generally poor, and sold at about two pence per lb. ; yet even this price restricted its use to the wealthier inhabitants. The mutton, however, is proverbially good, and, till October, very fat ; after that period it is not in general eaten fresh, as the sheep fall off in weight, and a sufficient quantity are slaughtered to last them out the winter.

Reindeer are plentiful but very inaccessible, keeping in the mountains, and only descending into the valleys when driven by starvation; the few therefore that are shot, principally in the neighbourhood of Thingvalle Vatn, are so reduced by hunger as to render them hardly worth the chase. Unlike their brothers in Lapland, they have never been put to any use, and since their introduction from Finmark, about sixty years ago, have multiplied wonderfully; for though now to be seen at times in herds of a hundred together, this stock was derived from only three individuals, the survivors of thirteen that the king sent over.

Ptarmigans are far easier got at, and their abundance may be imagined, when eleven hundred are sometimes caught by one man from December to March. They are occasionally shot; but the best, as well as most expeditious mode, is to snare them in the snow, and when left to freeze many are packed up in close barrels

with their feathers on, and sent in that state to Denmark, two and three months afterwards.

During the winter about a dozen of the merchants met every evening, and continued, with the most laudable perseverance, to play from six till twelve, and often even later, at one solitary game of cards. Indeed I do not even recollect to have heard any other game but Ombre mentioned among them; the "sable Matadors" took up their undivided attention, and except to light a cigar, or drink a glass of punch, the players seldom raised their eyes off the cards, even to venture upon a remark. The only advantage that I could ever discover in the game that they had selected, and kept to with such fidelity, is that, being interminable, it could be made to last as long as their own winter nights; and, to all appearance surpassed them in dulness.

Reikiavik is of modern date; for till within half a century of the present time, it could

scarcely be called a town. The two sees of Skalholt and Holum are generally marked as such in the maps, though they consisted of only a school, beside the residences of the bishops. In each of the ports was also to be found a timber house, belonging to the king, built for the purpose of carrying on the trade of the surrounding district, and occupied by the factors and their families. Gradually a few of the poorer people, attracted by the employment which the merchants gave them during the summer in discharging the ships, as well as by the fishery, settled on these spots, and built themselves a few cottages of the most wretched description in each harbour. The rest, however, of the population, with the exception of Reikiavik, remains dispersed in single farms over the country.

The first attempt at raising a town was made by the king, Christian VII., by establishing a woollen manufactory on the site of the present capital. The trade of the port before that

time had been carried on in a small island called Ephersœ, which at low water is connected with the mainland by a reef. In consequence of the washing away of one side, and the perceptible decrease of its extent, it was considered advisable to transfer the house that stood on it to the mainland. The name of Ingolf's Havn, or Ingolf's harbour, which the port bore till this time, was now changed for Reikiavik, from the smoke of a hot spring in the plain between it and the bishop's house at Laugarnœs. The manufactory itself did not answer so well as might have been wished, and though the king sent over for several boys and girls, and caused them to be instructed in various trades, his exertions in favour of this part of his subjects was not repaid with the success they deserved, nor at this time is any article exported but in its raw state, if we except some woollen knit goods, and a small quantity of brimstone, refined in the northern province. Three or four years ago an attempt was made by an enterprising indivi-

dual to establish similar works at Krusedvik, where sulphur abounds, but after the land that produced it had been purchased, and considerable expense incurred, so little encouragement was met with, that the affair was gradually dropped.

The governor at the same time removed from Bessestad to a house at Reikiavik, now used for the meeting of the High Court, and the two schools of Holum and Skálholt were united in one, and transferred to the same place. Since then the students have again shifted their quarters to their present house at Bessestad, the building at Reikiavik has been pulled down, and the only vestige of this defunct seat of learning is a clump of cottages built on its site, that still retain the name of Skola Bai. To render the seat of government complete, it was deemed requisite to add a prison, and accordingly the only stone house in the place was erected ; but as it was found to be not only unnecessary but to encourage vice, by affording more comfortable

quarters to criminals than many honest people could aspire to, it underwent the strange change of being converted into a residence for the governor, in whose more honourable occupation it remains to this day.

The cathedral has been built in the centre of the town in an open space called Ostervall, which in summer is generally covered with the tents of those who come to trade. It is built of hewn stone, with a wooden tower and roof, and has attached to one of its sides a sacristy,

scent from the cross, which, however, is the best specimen of the pictorial art to be met with in the country. To the left of it a railed seat is reserved for the bishop, who takes no part in the service himself, except at ordinations. On these occasions, the prelate wears over his satin rochet, a splendid stole of purple velvet covered with embroidery. The candidate is conducted to the steps of the altar by two priests in surplices, and after a long exhortation in Latin, which, I believe, is only made use of in this church ceremony, he is admitted into holy orders, the greater part of the service being chanted.

At the back of the town is a lake which communicates with the sea by a small stream, that separates the governor's house from the rest of Reikiavik. It has been suggested, that by widening this stream into a canal, the piece of water might be converted into a basin for shipping, but it is very doubtful whether the returns would repay the expense of the first

outlay, and the subsequently keeping it in a condition to be taken advantage of. In the spring, when the snow on the hills to the east and west of the town begins to thaw, the water in the lake is so much increased as not to find a ready exit by the stream, and the whole of the plain round the church is overflowed and impassable, except in boats. The timber houses are tarred over, and only one story high; nor would it be safe to build any more lofty of such slight material, from the great prevalence of gales throughout the winter. I was at first sight struck with the cleanliness of the streets, and, to do the people justice, they are kept in better order than most in other parts of Europe.

When viewed from the bay, the houses appear so low, as scarcely to expose more than the upper part of the window to the sight, an effect produced by the beach rising higher than the street, and the large heaps of stones that are piled along it to press down the fish when

dry. The middle of the town is not much above the high water-mark, and in stormy weather I have, more than once, seen the sea make its way into the streets. The winter before I was there, the water flooded the lower parts of many of the houses, at some distance from the sea; and unless some check in the form of a break-water be not attempted, it is not impossible that some of the houses in the centre may be shifted from their places, particularly as they merely rest upon stone platforms, and are not secured to any foundation.

CHAPTER VI.

DOMESTIC ECONOMY OF THE ICELANDERS.

IN giving a sketch of the occupations and domestic economy of the Icelanders, the account must chiefly be limited to the consideration of them as an agricultural community, for in a country in which a population under 60,000 is dispersed over an extent equal to that of Ireland, it cannot be expected that many can confine themselves to distinct trades, or that much beyond the cultivation of a small portion of the soil can be undertaken. We accordingly find, that with the exception of a small number,

who form the clergy and magistracy, the whole of the people are peasants, dependent either on agriculture or fishing; and even as regards these two solitary professions, their followers are, in many cases, obliged to add farming to their other occupations, to enable them to earn a moderate subsistence. Yet, though the tilling of the land is the ostensible pursuit of all, many of the peasants, when at leisure, turn their attention to some handicraft, and employ their time in winter in constructing those few field implements which are of a form peculiar to the country, and therefore not imported.

The farms are mostly occupied by the landowner, and in cases where rented, an annual payment is made by the tenant,—a part in butter, and the remainder in money, based on the number of “fiording,” or ten pounds weight of that article, which can be produced on the farm. Indeed butter and fish are very generally used as a standard of value in most transactions

between the peasants: wages to servants are usually paid in the former, and in the latter are computed the taxes due to the king. There is a fixed standard of size for the fish, without which the Sysselman will reject them, as the deficiency, arising from bad condition, or any other cause, will have to be made good to him.

The Icelandic way of measuring land resembles the old English mode, by hides, the value and not the extent being ascertained. The word hundred is used to signify any quantity of land, however extensive, which can support a horse, cow, and six sheep; and this mode of calculating originated in the ancient custom of valuing property by the number of ells of "wadmal," or cloth, producible on it.

The landlord's rights are very limited, for when once in possession, the tenant cannot be ejected, unless a farm of equal value be provided for him, as long as he continues regular in the payment of his rent; nor is the landlord allowed to raise the rent when he pleases, as on a dispute

about the increased value of the land, the decision is referred to the Hreppstjore, and two other competent judges. On the other hand, a remnant of feudalism appears in the obligation of a tenant who holds land on the coast, to serve in his landlord's fishing-boat throughout the season. Though he receives his share of what is caught, the tenant is often injured thereby, particularly when in possession of a boat himself. This custom is so much at variance with all their others, that it can be only ascribed to the scantiness of population, which makes it a matter of difficulty to man all the vessels built for fishing.

The only portion of this extensive island, from which profit is derived, or to which any idea of property is attached, consists of the long valleys and plains which run between the lesser mountains on the sea-coast. The centre is a vast desert, covered with "Jokuls," a name used to distinguish mountains perpetually clad in snow; these extensive glaciers forbid the

approach of man, for as even the land at their bases is too elevated to admit of the growth of grass, the greatest obstacle is placed in the way of penetrating among them in the shape of want of forage for the horses necessary to the undertaking. In travelling from the south to the north coast, a track is selected which avoids these mountains as much as possible; but even this pass will take up thirty-six hours, during which time the horses must continue without any food whatever. In summer this part of the journey is usually got over with as little delay as possible; but in winter it must often be accomplished on foot, from the depth of snow precluding the use of horses.

Sledges are not in use in Iceland, the country being too mountainous, and the weather too stormy. Nor did I see more than one pair of snow-shoes while among these people. In form they differed materially from those used by the North American Indians, and in my opinion not so well calculated for supporting a weight, as

they were made of one piece of wood, about four feet long, and very narrow, with the joints turned up. The pair I saw belonged to a man who had brought the mail from the North,—a journey which is often, in winter, attended with danger, not merely from the excessive cold, but from the sudden drifts of snow that overtake, and but too often overwhelm the traveller, who finds sufficient impediments to his progress in the darkness that shrouds him for twenty out of twenty-four hours. Yet I have heard it asserted that there are people living among the Jokuls, and that smoke seen in the distance is supposed to issue from their dwellings. Though I have heard this from more than one person, I can hardly give credit to the tale of any one having chosen such a residence; and attribute the whole to a popular belief that a band of robbers, who had fled at different times from justice, have selected this part of the country as a retreat, in which they can defy pursuit, and

form a society of their own, unrestrained by laws human or divine.

Between these Jokuls and the sea are chains of lesser mountains, partially covered at the base with a scanty verdure. Their summits, when not clothed in snow, that is hardly three months out of the twelve, present a black appearance, which spreads a gloom over the surrounding scenery, which is already far from cheerful. The valleys that intervene are, in general, extensive marshy plains; and it is in the more fertile part of these that the majority of the population is to be found.

These marshes often produce very good grass, and only require some expense, and more industry, to convert them into capital grazing land: but the almost insurmountable difficulties thrown in the way of any attempt of the kind, by the limited number of hands, and the rigour of the climate, would check the ardour of a more enterprising people than we are now con-

sidering. Their short summer scarcely suffices for the labours of the Sveit-Bondè, or upland peasant, who depends entirely on his flock for subsistence. Small as is his crop of hay, he is obliged to call in the aid of those who live on the coast, and are principally occupied in fishing. The latter, as soon as the fishing season is over, go to the Northern Amt for what is called *Kaupá vin*, or hired labour, and assist in the harvest, which takes up about six weeks, and then return to their former occupation. The winter rapidly sets in; and, during the ten months of its continuance, the intensity of the cold, the tempestuous state of the weather, and, more than either of these, the shortness of their days, render even the care of their flocks a difficult and often dangerous employment. For the loss of persons in quest of sheep is by no means an unusual occurrence; and on a snow-storm arising, it is absolutely necessary to collect them in hovels built for their shelter near the farm-house.

At such times it is impossible to see or hear, for the wind surpasses in violence any idea that can be formed of it; yet it is to this wind that the shepherd must trust as a guide. Marking its direction he dashes into the storm; the distance to be accomplished is indeed, perhaps, short; but should he swerve from the right way, the least deviation is sure to be fatal; and woe to him should the wind chop in the least, while on this employment; such a change will inevitably seal his fate, and he will wander in the dark; till, numbed by the cold, he will fall into a sleep which soon becomes that of death.

“ Alas!

Nor wife, nor children, more shall he behold,
Nor friends, nor sacred home! On every nerve
The deadly winter seizes, shuts up sense,
And, o'er his inmost vitals creeping cold
Lays him along the snows a stiffened corse,
Stretched out and bleaching in the northern blast.”

THOMSON.

Instances of such accidents are not unknown even in the immediate neighbourhood of F

kiavik. About Christmas, 1834, a young woman imprudently quitted the church alone before the service was over, with the intention of nursing a child that she had left at home. Before she had got out of the town a violent snow-storm was raging, which rendered it impossible to see an inch before her. Maternal solicitude, however, overcame her fears, and she hurried on towards her house, which was not more than a quarter of a mile distant; but she lost her way, and wandered about, till, becoming drowsy, she fell asleep. Upwards of one hundred persons went in quest of her for many successive days, and though the search was repeated several times during the winter, it proved unavailing, till the end of the following March, when a partial thaw discovered her corpse frozen in a sitting posture, within a few yards of her home!

Though so great a part of the year would seem from its inclemency to preclude labour, the winter is perhaps the period of greatest

activity, and these tenants of the frigid zone can scarcely boast of

“ Their long nights of revelry and ease.”

In summer the fatigue of mowing, and carrying home the hay, is comparatively light, and is rather a time of merry-making than of labour; but in winter each member of the family has his appointed share of business, to which he applies in earnest till the return of summer. It is usual for one individual to be sent out to the coast, and there engage himself to serve in a fishing-boat for the season. Another has the care of the cattle allotted to him; the making of horseshoes, and other smith's work, employs a third; and the remainder of the family of both sexes occupy themselves in making nets, and knitting their clothes.

In some houses of a better description, a loom of a rude construction, serves to supply the inmates with a kind of native cloth called Wadmal, which is used for trousers and petticoats; but the knitting of frocks and coarse stockings for exportation, as well as their own

ise, is a more general occupation than weaving. The clothes are not dyed until they are completed, and then undergo the operation by being wrapped up with indigo and logwood scattered in the folds, and in that state boiled till they have acquired the desired depth of colour, which is mostly a blue black. The making of ropes, by the tedious process of plaiting the wool by hand, also takes up no inconsiderable part of their time, as well as the providing themselves with sandals, which being of raw hide last but a very short time.

Huddled together in a small apartment, usually the loft, without stove or any warmth but that arising from the confined atmosphere, and the packing of twelve or fifteen persons in a place of just sufficient capacity to contain their bulk, the family continue their labours till a late hour in the night, often till two and three in the morning, enlivened by listening to one of the party who chants some Saga out of a book by the light of a dim seal-oil lamp. At

times the monotony of the single voice is relieved by a hymn, the kind of music most relished by the Icelanders, in which the whole family join. Occasionally they indulge in instrumental music, and the Longspeil is taken down from the wall to serve as an accompaniment to their mournful ditties.

This is the only musical instrument known among them, and is by no means calculated to enliven their spirits; indeed, if its gloomy tones are capable of producing any effect, I should say that it is that of instilling a black melancholy into the mind. In form it is a mere oblong tapering box, about two feet long and three inches wide, terminating somewhat like the head of a fiddle, and played upon with a violin bow. When in use it is laid upon a table, and the forefinger is applied only to the outer one of its three steel wires; and were it not for this difference it would give one the idea of a guitar in a rapid state of decline.

Besides this mode of recreation, it is rare

to enter a house that is not provided with a considerable number of books, in the selection of which, as in other matters, the seriousness of their national character is displayed, as besides the old Norse poems and sagas, works of a devotional tendency, are almost always to be met with. Yet, notwithstanding the universal attention paid to religion, which is remarkable, there appears no fondness for ostentatious display of that kind, nor do any set up claims to superior sanctity. In every family the morning work is commenced, and the evening concluded, with a prayer, in which every member joins ; the fishing-boat is not launched, before the "formadur," or chief, has implored divine protection for the crew while they remain at sea ; nor even in travelling will an Icelander commence his day's journey, before he has covered his face with his hat, and repeated a short supplication that he may accomplish it in safety.

At church it is not always possible for them

to attend; rivers and other natural obstacles, added to the distances that intervene between their churches, prevent them from assembling in as large numbers in winter as they do when the weather is at all favourable; but when there is a possibility of joining in public worship, there are, perhaps, few countries where so large a proportion of the inhabitants are to be found collected at one time in church. Indeed, during the winter I remained among them, I do not recollect the congregation of the church at Reikiavik having ever been thin, though many of those that attended it came five or six miles from their homes.

The shortness of the summers puts the cultivation of grain out of the question, or, indeed, the raising of any thing but a few vegetables in gardens, the introduction of which is of modern date. During my stay, I made a small kitchen-garden, and sowed it in the month of July, for the frost was not out of the ground in the middle of June, but the produce was in no great

state of forwardness on my leaving Iceland at the beginning of September. I was able, however, to take away a few potatoes and turnips; the first had reached the enormous size of tennis-balls, and the turnip; might have well passed for very large white radishes. Cabbages and lettuces had succeeded the best; yet, altogether, it must be allowed, that it is not exactly the place to exercise the talents of gardeners, as the time for sowing and that for reaping come too near together, and the rapidity of the vegetation is not proportionate to the time that it lasts.

The soil itself does not seem unadapted to the raising of grain, for rye has been found in some places growing wild. I have also seen some wheat in the garden of the Landfoged, which at the beginning of October was well looking, and about two feet high; yet it gave no indication, after that, of any intention of ripening. The total absence of corn in the present day has subjected the people to many

ills, by restricting them, in a great measure, to the use of animal food, and especially fish, which nourishment, added to their neglect of cleanliness, has probably tended to keep the leprosy among them, as well as many other cutaneous disorders which but too frequently offend the sight of the stranger wherever he goes.

The whole of the valleys are used as pastures; but the only part of the farm upon which manure is deposited, or care bestowed, is the ground immediately round the house. The size of this meadow varies considerably, and depends upon the quantity of live stock that the rest of the farm is able to support in summer, and is, in fact, the land upon which the cattle must depend for winter sustenance. As the house is generally built on a slope, or gentle eminence, to keep it dry, the meadow improves its appearance, and being covered with innumerable small hillocks, has much the appearance of a country churchyard in England. A

stone wall, or low earthen mound, generally encloses it, though the necessity of this defence is often obviated by the numerous dogs that prowl about the farm-house, and are taught, at the sound of a rattle, to chase any horses or cattle that are tempted by the superior quality of the grass to trespass on the "toon," as it is called; and its privacy is further secured by a law that allows the detention of any strange horse found on it after the 1st of May, till a fine of three silver marks is paid by the owner.

Of late years an attempt has been made by the more industrious to level these knolls, an operation rendered very slow by the scantiness of hands, and in which they have not been much encouraged, by finding not unfrequently, that after the lapse of some time the ground sinks, and reassumes its former appearance.

After a mild winter, the month of May generally finds the ground in a fit state for tillage. The first step is the collecting of manure, and spreading it on the toon, but as the horses

lie on spongy turf instead of litter, the land is not overburdened with richness. It is then beaten into the soil with clubs, and about the middle of June the grass begins to grow, with some rapidity, and is fit for mowing in August. When in its prime it is about six inches high, and of very unequal length, and is moreover much beset with every variety of weeds. From the unevenness of the surface, and the number of stones that are never removed, the haymakers are obliged to employ small scythes, with a straight handle and blade about eighteen inches long, in shape like a carving-knife. With this implement they rather shave than mow the hillocks perfectly bare, rarely leaving a blade even between the intervals, which are so narrow as not to admit of more than a man's foot. Yet, however expert they may become in the use of this scythe, the Icelanders can hardly mow a quarter of the same space that is usual in England in a day, and would probably be overtaken by the winter before the harvest was over,

did they not employ strangers to assist them. Both men and women work, the former receiving, besides their board, from two to three "fiörðing" of butter a week, and the latter half that quantity. While I was in Iceland, a fiörðing, or ten pounds weight, was considered equivalent to four-and-sixpence; but as work in summer is paid very highly, the general rate of wages must not be judged of by this particular payment.

The month of July is chiefly taken up by the preparations for the journey to the coast with their tallow, wool, and other commodities, and the bartering of their produce in the different ports. On their return, after an absence perhaps of two or three weeks, the whole of the hay is stacked, and it is customary for the farmers to give a feast to those who have assisted at the harvest. Much merriment prevails at these festivals, and the simplicity of the fare, consisting of rye-porridge and fish, with the addition of the first mutton killed that year, is compensated for by large bowls of rum punch, and the

broaching of kegs of corn brandy. To the immoderate use of the latter spirit the majority are but too much addicted, when within their reach. It is more fiery than any British spirit, and cannot be drunk otherwise than raw, as the least addition of water makes it turn as white as milk; yet its cheapness (for in summer it does not exceed the price of porter in England), causes great quantities to be consumed, and encourages the people to destroy their health, and abridge their lives, by this pernicious poison.

Before the winter sets in, the only remaining business to attend to, is the gathering of the wethers and barren ewes that have been sent among the mountains for the summer, to save as much of the grass as possible round the homestead. For this purpose, at the beginning of September the Hreppstiores call upon every farmer in their district to send a man in search of the sheep. On reaching that part of the country to which the flocks generally resort, the whole body divide into parties, and drive all the

sheep they find into pens ; and proceed in this way every day, until they have gathered the whole number that had been turned out in May. Occasionally some of the sheep stray so far as to preclude their recovery that year, and the owners have to wait for them till the following season. The business of each man claiming his own stock then follows, and the party separates after two or three weeks of roving in the mountains. The name given to this annual expedition is *Rettys*, derived probably from the fair adjudication of each man's property ; and the whole proceeding seems to be carried on with much good faith, as few complaints occur of the sheep getting in the hands of any but the real owners.

CHAPTER VII.

Icelandic houses — Dress — Poor-laws — Leprosy —
National character.

It has often struck me as a matter to be regretted, that in a country where manners and customs have been so little affected by the lapse of time as in Iceland, and where even the language has scarcely undergone any change for ten centuries, the buildings, which in other countries are the principal objects that recall past ages to us, should have, from the first, been constructed of such perishable materials as to require renewal from each generation into

whose hands they have passed. This has caused the island to be perfectly destitute of antiquarian remains; in fact whatever in it is ancient is the work of nature, and it would be vainer to look for reliques of antiquity in it than even in North America, where the rude Indian, in handing down to his children the customs of his forefathers, leaves behind him no more lasting memorial than the birchen wigwam which has sheltered him in his last moments, and will ere long disappear.

There is, I believe, at present but one solitary vestige of any ancient edifice to be found throughout the island, and that in a very imperfect state. The neighbourhood of Esiuberg is noted as the spot where human sacrifices were offered to the heathen gods during the tenth century; and the people at Kialarnœs, still point out the almost imperceptible remains of the temple where these horrors were committed. Many traditions are of course current, but little more, probably, than the site of the temple is to

be depended upon ; and it is not unlikely that several stone barrows found about have an equal claim to antiquity.

Judging from the account of their old writers, I should think that their rude architecture had not undergone much change in its style, and, with the exception of their wealth being lessened since their loss of independence, it is probable that a modern Bai is distributed much as their ancient houses were in their more palmy state. I remember an old book being shown me that contained a print of the principal hall in the house of one of their chieftains. At the upper end is represented the "Ondveige," or seat of honour, mentioned in Regner Lodbrog's Death Song, at which the master presided, supported by distinguished guests. The walls on either side were concealed with curtains, behind which were the sleeping-places of the family, and the light appears to have been admitted through openings in the roof, such as the skylights in Gothic halls.

The most usual site selected for the farm-houses is the northern side of a valley, so as to be protected from the wind by the mountains at the back, and to enjoy as great a share of sunshine as possible. The various buildings cover a considerable extent of ground, and each apartment has a separate roof. The gables all face the front of the house, and are mostly ornamented with fanciful vanes, and wooden crosses, painted red. The entrances are on the south side, and only the principal one admits into the interior where the family dwell; the others lead into the dairy, smithy, and tool-house, which do not communicate with any other apartment. The stables and cow-houses, form the extremity of the building, to which is attached an enclosure, surrounded by a wall, about six feet high, where the hay is piled up in small stacks, and to which, as there is no gateway, the only access is by a ladder.

The walls of the house rarely exceed eight feet in height, and are pierced with a window or

door under each gable. Their thickness, and the necessity of making the openings of the windows wider on the outside than at the casements, gives these holes the appearance of the embrasures of a rampart, which is further increased by the house being covered with grass, and built on a gentle slope. I had often observed a number of cows' skulls lying on the wall of the hay-yard, and had been at a loss to discover to what use they could be put, till I found that they were universally kept as stools for milking. Occasionally a very small garden is to be met with in front of farm-houses, in which a few dwarfish vegetables live, but can scarcely be said to grow. Round about are scattered numbers of small hovels, sufficiently high to admit of sheep taking shelter in them during stormy weather; and on the sea-coast, an additional building, called a Hiattle, is always to be found, which serves to dry their fish in, its four sides being made of open bars of wood to admit the wind from every quarter.

As yet we have only viewed the exterior of the house, which is certainly not very inviting ; and I fear, that on examination, the interior will not tend to change our opinion. Entering by the principal door, we proceed up a damp stone passage, ornamented with saddles, bridles, and all kinds of horse furniture. At every step the light diminishes, and, as it entirely vanishes, we are left to grope our way through low doorways, till we arrive at the " Eld Huus," or kitchen, in the centre of the building, the only place in which a fire is ever kindled, except among the richest people. To the right and left are various apartments destined for household purposes ; and, after many twistings and turnings, we reach the " guest room," reserved for the purpose indicated by its name. It has the advantage of being panelled, and contains the best furniture in the house. When not occupied by a stranger, it serves as a receptacle for every article not in immediate use. The side-saddles, spinning-wheels, &c., are piled on the bed, in

the greatest confusion, and the rest of the apartment is crowded with large chests, which do the double duty of containing the attire of the family and serving as seats; and as all this takes place in rooms which rarely exceed twelve feet by ten, it may be easily conceived that there is not much space left for the live inmates.

The garret, which is the place principally occupied by the family, is approached through an opening in the ceiling, by the assistance of a ladder. The form of the garret will not admit of standing upright, except in the middle; but the whole is made available by having berths, like on board ship, along each side. The room is lighted by a small window at each end, and not more so than is sufficient to see one's way. In this style of apartment the whole family sleep, and the necessity of a fire is thus avoided by the numbers that are crowded together. In this dark room, it is often dangerous to move along from the prevalent custom

of leaving some of the boards in the flooring loose and unplanned. In case of a death occurring in the house, at a time when it would be inconvenient to fetch timber from the coast, recourse can at once be had to this part of the floor for materials for a coffin, and the deficiency caused thereby can be made good the following summer.

While at work in winter the women generally sit on their beds cross-legged ; and to counteract the effects of remaining long in the same position, they acquire a habit of swinging their bodies from side to side. This is not entirely confined to the females ; and it becomes so powerful, that I have often observed men, while standing in the open air, in conversation, keep up this sort of perpetual motion, without being conscious of it.

The common costume of the men is a knit jacket and waistcoat, fitting close to the body, and devoid of collar. A red or green edging is usually added to this part of the dress, as well

as numerous small silver buttons down the front and the sleeves : a very deep blue is the universally adopted colour. On journeys, overalls, almost wholly covered with leather, are worn ; and in stormy weather a diminutive blue cloak, hardly reaching to the knees, is added as a riding-habit.

The every-day dress of the women is of the deepest blue, and consists of a knit jacket, fastened up to the chin with hooks and eyes, and long bunchy petticoats of "wadmál." The throat is protected by a black silk kerchief worn as by men amongst us ; and the hair falls unconfined on the shoulders from beneath a conical cloth cap, to the end of which is fastened, by a gold or silver acorn, a long silk tassel that hangs on one side of the face. During the warm months the jacket is thrown off, and a scarlet bodice is discovered, ornamented with stripes of gold lace over the seams, and fastened in front with a silver chain that runs through eyes of the same material.

At church a smart jacket, called a "treja," is worn over the bodice, short enough to display the scarlet beneath it. Every seam is covered with velvet of a colour that will set off the ground on which it is sewn, which varies according to the taste of the owner. Round the neck a stiff velvet ruff, worked in silver lace, is surmounted by a rather gaudy neckerchief. A massive silver belt, made of plates handsomely worked, encircles the waist, and from the front of it three or four ornaments in filligree, of the size and form of an old-fashioned watch, are suspended. Both the petticoat and apron, which is never dispensed with, are garnished with numerous rows of velvet, which give the costume a rich though somewhat heavy appearance.

With this dress, the hair is turned up and concealed under a high cap, resembling nothing of the kind worn in any other country that I have ever been in. The principal part of the head-dress is a skull-cap, with a peak like the crest of a helmet, covered with white linen, and

studded with pins; and the part that supports this projection is covered with a silk handkerchief, crossed round the head, so as only to leave the cone, which is called "skoit-faldur," exposed to the view.

The absence of trees prevents the Icelanders tanning skins, and obliges them to make use of raw hides in every case in which they will at all answer the purpose; we accordingly never find them wearing shoes, but substituting for them sandals of raw sheepskin or cow-hide. These are formed of a single piece, sewn together at the heels, and puckered from the toes towards the instep, and are bound round the ankle by several thongs crossed over one another.

The bits of their bridles are all of home manufacture, and are made with very heavy bars of brass, sufficient to keep in subjection far more powerful horses than their quiet ponies. It is the fashion to cover the saddle with a blue and red shabrack, at the top of which a small

embroidered cushion is strapped. The stirrups are frequently attached to the saddle by chains instead of leathers, nor is it uncommon to see half of the reins composed of iron links.

Females ride in side-saddles, made like elbow-chairs, and rest their feet on a board hung from them. Those used by wealthy persons have the outside, as well as the headstall and crupper, completely covered with plates of brass, curiously embossed. The poorer women, however, rarely use the side-saddle, but ride astraddle on a pad, with their feet fixed in wooden stirrups, so short as to raise the knees considerably above the horse's back.

As from the absence of wheel-carriages, every thing has to be transported on the backs of horses, it might be expected that the Icelanders would be particularly expert in loading their beasts of burden, and avoid galling them; but, perhaps, no people attend less to the state of their horses' backs than they, and almost every second animal used for carrying, is in a continual state

of torture, from the sores to which they are subject from the kind of pack-saddles in use. These are nothing more than a square piece of turf, selected from the marshes for its pliancy; the sort used is called "reidinga," and consists entirely of fibres, and in appearance resembles a very thick mat. When the back is severely galled, the only remedy ever thought of is the insertion of two or three horse-hair setons in the chest, which, instead of giving relief, only produces new wounds, and inflicts additional torture on the poor animals.

Before concluding the chapter, it will, perhaps, not be superfluous to say a word concerning their management of the poor. The charitable institutions themselves are limited, both as regards number and means; but as every individual is bound by law to support his needy relatives, as far as the fourth degree of kindred, and as the smallness of the population gives scope for the employment of all who are able and willing to work, the claims upon indi-

vidual benevolence become comparatively few. Mendicity is unknown, and the wants of those who have no relations to look to, are supplied by the operation of a system adapted to the habits of the people, and rendered effective by good administration.

The care of the poor is committed to the Hreppstjóri, who is assisted by the clergyman of the parish, and an individual who acts as treasurer. By these three persons, rates, according to the urgency of the case, are levied on the inhabitants: but the more usual way, except at Reikiavik, is to billet the old and infirm upon the peasants of the Hrepp. Although the latter are not bound to keep a pauper in their house longer than six months, and may require the Hreppstjóri at the end of that period to remove him to the next neighbour, they rarely avail themselves of this power, but keep him for the rest of his life. In the same way, a widow left with several children, will find no difficulty in bringing them up; and it is very

common for persons to take them off her hands and adopt them.

By a law, which I am not sure is always strictly enforced, no man can contract marriage unless he is possessed of a hundred of land ; but as this would be difficult to procure on the coast, a six-oared boat, in complete trim, is considered an equivalent for the land.

The only hospitals to be found are for the reception of lepers; and they were originally instituted, not so much with a view of attempting cures, as of separating from the healthy part of the community persons afflicted with that loathsome disease. They are none of them within the immediate reach of medical aid ; and the persons who have the care of the patients do not pretend to do more than keep them alive. As it is, the faculty of the whole island consist of one physician and chemist at Reikiavik, and four surgeons dispersed over the rest of the country. Not more than five years ago both the land-physicus and apothecary resided at the

extremity of a promontory, more than two miles distant from the town and it was necessary to send that distance for the least article that was wanted. The physician has a salary of one hundred pounds per annum and a residence, and the apothecary, besides the monopoly of the island, receives an allowance from the king for the annual distribution of a small quantity of medicines gratis. The pay of the surgeons is but small, nor is the addition of some trifling fees from their wealthier patients adequate to the labour of superintending the health of a people scattered over such an extent of ground.

The hospitals are supported by the fishery, the whole of the fish that is caught upon a fixed day being divided into one more than the usual number of shares, and that portion belongs to the hospitals. A day closely following upon Easter Sunday, is usually selected ; but should the fishery fail to produce five fish to a share, the hospital's right is not taken till it amounts to that number.

I have never been myself in any of the leper hospitals, and cannot therefore speak positively as to their internal management; but I have heard from Icelanders who had been in the one which formerly existed at Skalholt, that filth and misery were the principal features in it; perhaps since that time some improvement may have found its way even into these abodes of wretchedness. The generality of houses are but ill calculated to keep their inmates in health; and it can scarcely be expected that when the system is in a state of corruption, it can be renovated by crowding the patients into dirty hovels, from which fresh air and light are excluded, and where the food is of the same unwholesome kind that perhaps tended to bring on the disease.

In stature the Icelanders are considerably above the middle height, and though not remarkably slight, I should say they were altogether a spare people. This only refers to the male part of the population, and may perhaps

be attributed to their clothes fitting rather tight to their persons. The women, on the contrary, exhibit the reverse, and are rather plump. Both sexes are fair, but I was rather disappointed at finding that white hair, instead of being universal, is by no means as common as in Scotland and Denmark. The women keep their good looks longer than might be expected from the rudeness of the weather, and have a much livelier cast of countenance than the other sex. The men occasionally wear their hair long, but not so commonly as the Swedes; nor do I recollect more than two or three instances of the beard being allowed to attain a patriarchal length, though it is not at all unusual to see it verge towards it through neglect.

In the character of the Icelanders I should say gloom prevailed to a great degree, and certainly the first impression on a stranger's mind will not be favourable to them. His patience will often be put to the test by their dilatory habits, and his temper will be further tried by

their manners, many of which are very disgusting ; such as transferring milk from one bottle to another through the medium of their mouths, and several other customs too offensive to be particularized ; but he will find much honesty and wish to oblige, when it is in their power.

Their hospitality should rather be measured by their wish, than their ability to treat guests well. Of pride they are by no means deficient, and they add to it a great degree of stubbornness, which they mistake for independence, and though rarely warm, they are always courteous in their manner. As regards their intellect, they are above mediocrity, and only want room to exercise their talents, which cannot be denied them, when we call to mind that the first living sculptor, Thorwaldsen, is an Icclander.

CHAPTER VIII.

Division of the country—Laws—Courts—Excommunication.

TILL within a century of the present time it was usual for the kings of Denmark to confer the government of Iceland on admirals, who occasionally visited, but did not constantly reside on the island. In Stephenson's history of the eighteenth century a list is given of all the public officers during that period, from which it appears that some only landed for a few days,

and that others never even approached the seat of their government. When they did remain for any length of time, they took up their abode at Bessestad ; but the governorship seems, on the whole, to have been a sinecure given to reward naval officers. As, however, this system was found not to work well, a governor was sent over, who remained there the whole time that he kept the office, and the title of Stiff-Amtmand, was conferred on him, to denote that his authority extended to ecclesiastical as well as civil affairs, the word Stift signifying in Danish, diocese, and Amt, province. Besides a general control over the whole island, the southern Amt is under his immediate care ; while Westerland is confided to an inferior Amtman, and Nordland and Osterland are united under another officer, of the same denomination. The chief governor has, with one exception, been always either a Dane or a Norwegian, but the inferior situations are generally intrusted to natives.

The four provinces are subdivided into nineteen Syssells, or counties, in the following manner :

<i>Westerland.</i>	<i>Sudland.</i>	<i>Nordland.</i>	<i>Osterland.</i>
Isafjord	Borgafjord	Hunavatn	North Mule
Bardestrand	Kiosè and Gulbringè	Hegranes	South Mule
Strand	Aarnes	Thingey	West Skapta Field
Snæfjelds	Ragga Vale		East Skapta Field
Hnappadalls	Westman Isles		
Myre			

Over each division is placed a Syssellmand, to whose decision all cases, both civil and criminal, are submitted in the first instance. He acts as auctioneer at all public sales, administers to the effects of deceased persons, is notary public, and collects all taxes due to the king. For these multifarious duties he is remunerated by receiving a third of the proceeds of the taxes. The profits vary considerably in different Syssells. Aarnes and Ranga Valle, the two best, are worth about two hundred pounds a year each, but the generality fall far short of that sum, and

I have heard of one in Nordland that did not yield more than twenty-six rix dollars a year. Before any one can be appointed to even the least profitable of these offices, he must have studied jurisprudence in the university of Copenhagen; and those who have distinguished themselves there are subsequently removed, when vacancies occur, to the easier and more lucrative places of Amtmen, and judges of the Lands-over-Rett.

Before a civil action can be commenced, the dispute must be referred to two persons in the Hrepp, who constitute the Forliks Connifior. Should the mediation of these officers bring the contending parties to terms, the agreement is final, otherwise it must be brought before the Sysselmand, from whose decision there is an appeal to the Lands-over-Rett, or High Court. From this tribunal the action may be removed again to the Cancellie, or Chancery, in Copenhagen, and, lastly, to the king, whose decision is in all cases final.

In criminal cases, the Syssellmand forwards his judgment to his Amtmand, who, on disapproval of the sentence, sends it to be decided by the High Court. But when a capital offence has been committed, the law cannot be enforced before the sentence has been confirmed by the King's signature. A long period must naturally elapse before a trial can be brought to this stage, ships sailing but twice a year to Denmark; but the infliction of death is of such rare occurrence, that a more rapid mode of checking offences is unnecessary. Offences against property may be said to be the only ones known, and even these are both rare and trivial. During the year I remained there, only one conviction for theft took place at Reikiavik, and the value of the article stolen did not amount to five shillings. Horse and sheep stealers are transported to Denmark, and confined in the goal of Copenhagen; but all other offenders, when their thefts are not accompanied by aggravating circumstances, are let off with a flogging. The pain of

this correction must be supposed to be applied more to the mind than the body, for the severity of it does not exceed that of the punishment daily administered to schoolboys in England. The greatest number of stripes must not exceed twenty-seven, repeated three days running, and the sentence is put into force privately.

Adultery is also visited by the law with a whipping, when repeated. The first infraction of the statute subjects the delinquent to a fine, and the third to hard labour at Copenhagen. In later years this law has not been acted upon with all its rigour, and the corporal punishment has been sometimes commuted for a pecuniary penalty; and I know of one instance in which a man convicted of repeated offences against this branch of the code, was punished by a confinement of eight days on bread and water.

As there is no prison in the island, when a man is accused of an offence, the Hreppstjóri notifies to him that he is not to quit the district he lives in; and should he disregard this in-

Junction, the officer will at once confine him in his house. The summary punishments of flogging and fining make any privation of liberty unnecessary, and the difficulty of leaving the country secretly adds to the security of the delinquent, though left at large. I have, however, heard of an instance of persons escaping while under sentence. A man and his wife, living at Havnifiord, had been condemned to imprisonment in the gaol of Copenhagen; as it was winter and no opportunity offered of transporting them thither, they were left at home to await the departure of the first ship: but one morning they were both missed, and upon searching their Bai, a paper was found containing some money, with directions that it should be employed in the support of a child that they left behind. Neither of them was ever heard of after; and the only probable conjecture about the matter is that they made for the Shetlands, for it was never suspected

that they had committed suicide, which is an act almost unknown in Iceland.

The court called Lands-over-Rett, or the supreme court of the land, consists of three judges, the chief of whom is styled Justitiarias, and the others Assessors, and each has an equal weight in the decision of the matter before them. The proceedings are not carried on *viva voce*, nor does the court sit longer at a time than to receive the written affidavits and arguments of both sides, or to read the judgment it has agreed upon. Its institution is but of recent date, as it was only at the beginning of this century that it took the place of the ancient tribunal held yearly at Thingvalle. To give the country the advantage of more frequent sessions the present permanent court was established at Reikiavik, where it assembles every month.

As far as regards the ceremonial part, nothing appertaining to a tribunal could evince greater

Simplicity. On the morning of the meeting, an **O**fficer announces the fact by beating an old **d**rum round the town. The three judges take **t**heir seats at the upper end of a very indifferent **r**oom, dressed in crimson uniforms and cocked **h**ats, before a common table : the sitting of the **c**ourt is again formally proclaimed, the president **t**hen rises, reads the sentences from a book, and **h**aving signed them, the court adjourns till **t**he following month. The proceedings are **c**arried on in Icelandic, and afterwards translated **i**nto Danish, that they be submitted to the **C**ancellie at Copenhagen.

At present there is no sign of trial by jury to be found in their judicial proceedings ; but a practice mentioned in the ecclesiastical history, and somewhat similar to the wager of law in England, would make it appear that such has not always been the case. The practice alluded to is the judgment by Tylftar Eidr, on the oath of twelve men ; that is, a man able to find eleven others to join with him in swearing to

his innocence was released from the charge made against him. This species of challenge is mentioned at a very early period of their history, and has by this time been lost sight of; but it is certain that no people have a greater sense of the solemnity of an oath than the Icelanders. They are at no time very willing to take one, and I have known a man pay a disputed debt, though he might have avoided it with a clear conscience, rather than be brought to swear that it was not due.

Civil actions are but rare, and are limited to matters of trifling consideration. Disputes about the possession of landed property might be more common, were they not checked by a register of the transfer of estates called the "Jord Bok," or land book, and by its means the various owners of the soil can be traced to the remotest period, as well as the pedigree of many who go back to the time of Ingolf. The use of surnames is restricted to the few who have found it necessary to take one while re-

maining in foreign countries. The mass, in general, distinguish one another by adding the name of the place they live at, as Peter of Engoe, John of Selsund ; in writing, the name of the father takes the place of surname, with "son" or "dotter" attached, as Gudmunder Thorsteinson and Margaret Jonsdotter. Neither is it usual to prefix any word to the names of persons when addressing them, unless they have some Danish title; and the only exception made is in favour of the clergy, who are never spoken of or to, without the word Sire being used.

The ecclesiastical establishment of the island is on a greater scale than might be expected ; it includes a bishop, a provost for each Syssel, and about two hundred and fifty parishes ; and as in many cases one, or even two, extra churches are annexed to a living, and the clergyman is obliged to keep a curate, the whole number of priests may amount to about three hundred. The office of provost, though attended with some trouble, makes but little

addition to the income of the priest, except in the single case of the provost of Gardè, who is styled the "Stift-Profastur," or Dean of the diocese. The appointment of the latter, as well as that of bishop, is in the hands of the king, and the rest of the clergy are presented to livings by the governor.

The support of the parochial clergy, is derived principally from the glebe land attached to their benefices. To increase their trifling income, a fixed annual sum by way of tithe is paid by each parishioner, according to the value of the land he occupies. The pastor can also claim a day's work yearly, and the privilege of having a lamb kept for him from October to the following April, by each farmer. This, with a small offering at Christmas, and a few trifling fees for baptism, confirmation, marriage, and burial, constitute the whole of his stipend.

The pittance derived from these various sources does not in many cases amount to ten pounds sterling, and with this sum he has to support

a wife and family. As, however, their ecclesiastical dues alone would not suffice to support life, clergymen labour like their neighbours, and depend upon their cattle like other farmers. Although some few of the priesthood are relieved from absolutely labouring themselves, by holding the best livings, by far the greater part are rather below than above the peasantry in pecuniary circumstances ; and were it by money that the respect for the clergy was kept up, they would long ago have sunk below the level of the people. It is, however, to their education that they owe the deference at all times shown them, and the priest, who has during the week-days been employed like a simple peasant, rises to his proper position on Sunday, and is as much respected, and probably more beloved, by his parishioners, than his brethren in countries where the church and wealth go together.

For some time subsequent to the introduction of Christianity, the appointment of the clergy remained in the hands of the landowners. The

two bishoprics of Skalholt and Holum, which were founded in 1056 and 1107, were subjected to foreign control till the reformation ; they were first placed under the jurisdiction of the Bishops of Bremen and Hamburg ; at a later period included in the Archbishopric of Lund in Sweden ; and lastly they were transferred to the care of the Bishops of Drontheim in Norway.

By degrees the power of the church of Rome extended itself even to this remote land, and the prelates availed themselves of it to claim the right of nominating to benefices. The monastic institutions also increased in number, and were disseminated in various parts of the country ; but both their possessions, and the patronage of the bishops, were seized by the king at the Reformation. The present king, however, has reserved to himself the gift of only the four best preferments, and those he confers on the Icelandic students who have distinguished themselves the most at the university of Copenhagen.

Until the end of the eighteenth century the original division into two sees continued in force ; but the funds for the support of two prelates having become inadequate, the island was, by an order of the king in 1797, formed into one "Stift," or diocese. The lands whence the bishops derived their revenues were sold, and an income of 1000 specie dollars, drawn from the public treasury, was granted in their place to the sole prelate.

For many years the marriage of the clergy was permitted, and we even find that Islief, the first Bishop of Skalholt, was succeeded by his son. At first, also, the ecclesiastical profession was much sought after by the higher orders, and many united civil and religious offices in their persons. The church of Rome, however, made objections to this practice, and in A.D. 1190 succeeded in abolishing it ; though the effect of this injunction was by no means advantageous to the priesthood, either as regarded their interests or respectability. Many who had

their means reduced by this change, were obliged to have recourse to handicraft, and some who disliked this new mode of obtaining a livelihood became dissolute characters, and brought disgrace on their order.

The popes, meanwhile, did not overlook the possibility of drawing some fiscal advantages from the people. Accordingly a crusade was preached in 1275 in Iceland, and the inhabitants were enjoined to come forward with their quota for the expedition. The Pontiff at the same time prudently sent over a number of indulgences for sale. The novelty of the undertaking, and the promise of eternal happiness to those who embarked in the holy war, so worked upon the feelings of the people, that numbers took up the cross ; but when the enthusiasm of the moment had passed away, and they considered the uncertainty of the undertaking, they purchased dispensations from the obligation of proceeding to the Holy Land, and

relinquished the glory of defeating the Saracens to their southern neighbours.

The experiment had succeeded so well, as far as the interests of the church were concerned, that it was repeated in 1289. The same arguments were used, and the same alternative was offered to them, of compounding for money, but both failed, and the age of crusades passed away without one Icelfander being recorded to have

“Streamed the ensign of the Christian cross
Against black pagans, Turks, and Saracens.”

A tenth of the revenue of the church was afterwards claimed by the popes, and though not annually exacted, it appears to have been frequently collected, under the name of “Pavatiunde,” or Pope’s tithe. They also contributed their mite to the tax known as Peter’s Penny, the payment of which was commanded in 1305 by the King of Norway, and enforced under the penalty of excommunication.

This last stretch of priestly power did not find its way into the country till near two hundred years after the introduction of Christianity. Until that period the clergy had been satisfied with mild remonstrances ; when their power was increased, they were not able to resist the temptation of upholding their authority by the terror of their punishments, rather than the respect due to their virtues. Accordingly the first sentence of excommunication was passed in 1180, and it appears that this mode of disposing of persons obnoxious to the priests, was afterwards not unfrequently resorted to. The minor excommunication (for the punishment was of two kinds which differed materially in severity) was called "Forbod," and subjected individuals to privation of worship, and to separation from the congregation.

The greater punishment which the church made use of when it intended to crush an individual, was of a far more serious nature. It was called Bann, and as its consequences were

terrible, the pronouncing of it was attended with much ceremony ; the form was in Latin, though it was also at times repeated in Norse, and Icelandic, to increase the effect produced on those present. On the appointed day the bishop entered the church, in full canonicals, attended by the clergy of his diocese each bearing a taper in his hand. The prelate began by calling down curses on the culprit in the name of the Deity ; upon every part of his person, and upon every act of which he was capable, individual curses were pronounced ; not a function of nature was omitted, whether moving or still, sleeping or waking, the anathema was to be upon him. After having cursed him in detail, the bishop declared the recusant a component part of the devil, and ended with these words : “ As these lights are extinguished so may thy soul be extinguished in Hell to all eternity ! ” As the last denunciation passed from his lips the whole of the priests immersed their tapers into water, and the church remained

in complete darkness, while the victim expelled from it, an outcast from society divested of every privilege that a human can lay claim to.

The reformation swept away these abuses and the clergy gradually returned to their primitive position. The right of marriage also restored with the introduction of Lutheran religion, which is the only creed is allowed in the island, and is also like remain the only one, for as yet but one tary case of dissent from it has occurred, in person of a Socinian.

CHAPTER IX.

Laugarness—Kjalarness—Dulness of the winter—
Amusements.

MY arrival in Iceland took place at too late a part of the year to admit of my wandering very far before the setting in of the winter with all its rigour. I was therefore obliged to confine my rambles to a journey to the Geysers, in the month of September, and a few visits in the neighbourhood of Reikiavik. As, however, I made another trip to the boiling springs the following year, at a time when none of my

countrymen have seen them, I think it preferable to give a detailed account of my second journey, which afforded me an opportunity of judging of the effects of the seasons on these fountains.

I took an early opportunity of paying my respects to the Bishop Steingrímur Jonson, at his residence at Laugarness about three miles further up the Bay of Reikiavik. His predecessor, Geir Vidalin, had lived in the town and at his death the King of Denmark had a stone dwelling built for the present bishop, which he now inhabits. The house, though by no means large, and but one story high, was built by the government at an outlay of about three thousand pounds, which was chiefly incurred by the masons and other workmen being all sent over from Denmark, and being employed three summers in the work. The interior is comfortable and has several good sitting-rooms, besides offices for depositing the ecclesiastical records of the island. The bishop

possesses also a considerable library, and must be a voluminous writer if we are to judge by his manuscripts, which filled many of the shelves : I do not believe, however, that he has as yet published any of his works.

On our entering the house he received us very cordially, and had cakes and wine placed before us ; he then took us into his library, and among other curiosities showed us some parchment records, with seals attached, of the earliest bishops of Skalholt and Holum. Before our departure he insisted upon our taking a cup of coffee, which had been prepared for us while looking at his books, a custom universally observed towards visitors.

I was induced to ride over to Kialarness to see the site of the ancient heathen temple, very faint traces of which are at present visible. It is situated on the side of the bay opposite to Reikiavik, and the journey to it by land is twenty good miles, and at high water even more, as the mouths of several rivers have to

be crossed on the way. A range of mountains called Esian, about fifteen hundred feet high, rises almost perpendicular, leaving a plain of about two miles width between their foot and the sea. This strip of land is continued to the northward, till another bay called "Hvalfiord," or Whale frith, breaks off the connexion of Esian-berg, the name by which the plain is known, from Akrefield in Borgarfiord.

The land is fine pasturage, and at that time belonged to Biorn Stephenson, the secretary of the Lands-over-Rett, who died while I was in the country. He invited me in, and bade me join him at dinner; as this was the first time that I had dined with an Icelfander, I was much struck at seeing his wife, who has the title of "Fru," or Lady, assisting her servant-girls in laying the table, at which she placed no cover for herself. She presently brought in a joint and other dishes, but did not sit down herself; she continued her attentions during the meal, changing the plates, and when dinner was

over removed the dishes and brought in the coffee. However disconsonant to our feelings this custom may be, it bears the marks of the greatest antiquity, and is observed in every thorough Icelandic house.

With such short trips round the country I managed to kill the time for the first month; but I am afraid that after the beginning of October the time would have hung very heavy on my hands, particularly when there was an almost total absence of daylight, had there not been a library kept over the chancel of the church. The collection was originally begun at Copenhagen, and it owes its existence principally to voluntary contributions, and to the aid of the King of Denmark, who has presented to it several very valuable Danish works. At present, though it is not easy to be exact as to the number, owing to the little order observed in their arrangement, there cannot be fewer than from four to five thousand volumes. As may be expected, the majority are Danish and

Icelandic; next to these the English works surpass those in any other language in value and number. Most of the classics, both Latin and Greek, are to be found; and a good number of German, together with a sprinkling of Swedish, French, and Italian books complete the catalogue. The English portion has at different times been sent by some learned society in London, but which it was I was unable to discover; it contains some valuable histories, travels, and many religious and miscellaneous works. Once a week the governor's secretary attends for an hour in the middle of the day, and persons are allowed to carry away any number of books upon leaving a receipt for them. Occasionally half a dozen persons presented themselves, and took away a volume or two; but a very large proportion of the books in foreign languages which I perused, bore evident marks of not having seen the light since their arrival in their new country; and when I restored them to their places on the dusty shelves,

I could not help reflecting on the long repose which they would enjoy before they were again awakened by some future traveller.

A ship is engaged every year at Copenhagen by the government, to convey official papers and letters to Iceland at the commencement of winter. This vessel is bound to leave Elsinore on the first of October, and after landing the mail at Reikiavik, it is laid up till the month of March in a creek of the bay of Havniford, where it remains frozen up. Though this voyage is always attended with very bad weather, it is remarkable that only one vessel has been lost on it for the last twelve years. The principal danger is the approaching the coast in November, when the shortness of daylight, and thickness of fogs that hang round the island, make the trip extremely perilous. From the end of October every one was on the look-out at Reikiavik for this ship, which is the most welcome that reaches their shores. Day after day the people were to be seen climbing, with

telescopes in their hands, to a slight eminence which commands a view of Faxèfiord, and straining their eyes to descry the wished-for sail on the horizon, which did not gratify their expectations till the middle of November. She had been seven weeks on the passage, which was by no means one of uncommon length.

The news of her arrival spread like wildfire, every body was in a state of restlessness, and each person I met repeated the intelligence which I had heard a hundred times within an hour. Even the morning after, as I was standing on the beach, looking at the solitary galliot rocking violently in the harbour, two or three Icelanders could not refrain from pointing her out to me, and announcing her arrival. The chests which contained the correspondence of the whole island, were hurried on shore, and carried to the government house to be distributed. The tide now turned in that quarter, and every one was seen rushing out with letters and every variety of countenance. Of the

latter I unfortunately was not one, from some mistake in the direction of those addressed to me; and when I attempted to get some information concerning the general state of Europe, the only news that I could extract from the captain, was the death of the Emperor of Austria.

In a few days the ship had discharged her cargo and sailed, to take possession of her winter quarters at Havnifiord. The usual dullness again resumed its sway till Christmas, when the severity of the weather increased and the darkness became almost total. These did not, however, prevent the Danish enjoying themselves and keeping the festival; and the king's birthday, which followed soon after, gave them another opportunity of dissipating the gloom peculiar to the season of the year.

Flags were hoisted on every house belonging to a merchant, and even the little wooden windmill outside the town was ornamented with the national colours. Preparations were made

for a public dinner which was to be followed by a ball, at which all persons in office were to be present. The dinner began at four and was very good, considering the difficulty of procuring materials. Soup, flanked by pieces of beef and mutton, and followed by swans, wild ducks, and ptarmigans, formed the principal ingredients of the feast, which was washed down with numerous bottles of champagne, which put the company in the best possible humour. Before the entertainment was concluded, copies of a song composed for the occasion by one of the party were handed round, and the whole table joined in chorus.

About nine o'clock the tables were cleared and the dancing began. The *locale* consisted of two low rooms, and a smaller one between them in which punch was imbibed copiously by the male part of the company, while the next in size was occupied by the ladies, who were as busily employed in drinking coffee and talking scandal—for scandal has reached even this

distant spot. The largest apartment, illuminated with about fifty candles, was reserved for dancing. This consisted of what they were pleased to call English country-dances, though as I am not a frequenter of balls, I cannot answer for its resembling any thing of the sort in our country. There was much running up and down, and clapping one another's hands, and the heat produced by the exercise, soon became visible on the faces of those who joined in the pastime. Later in the evening there was waltzing, though the music elicited from two violins and a drum, which represented the band, was not favourable to that kind of movement, and, added to the confined space for action, produced nothing but jostling. Those who did not join in the dance, went up into the loft and passed their time in smoking cigars and playing at the eternal Ombre, in a place probably only a few degrees hotter than an oven, and continued there with the greatest persever-

ance, till five in the morning, when the party broke up. At neither this nor any subsequent dancing-party, did I see any woman present who habitually wore the national costume. Their cloth "trejas," fastened tight up to the chin, and their lofty head-dress, are so ponderous that they soon make dancing more a labour than an amusement.

The rigour of the weather continued unabated during the four following months. Storms were of daily occurrence; at one time

remained fast. That between Reikiavik and Bessestad might be crossed on horseback where it was six miles wide.

During the month of February, the thermometer several times fell ten degrees below zero at Reikiavik, and within twelve miles from it in the interior, the mercury had fallen several degrees lower. I had my coffee freeze one morning in the saucer while I was drinking it out of the cup, and this happened in a very small room with a stove full of fire. (I have since been in North America, and though the cold indicated by the thermometer was greater than in Iceland, the frost was far more sensible in the latter country.) The lowest that I have ever seen the thermometer was in Quebec, when the mercury fell thirty-two degrees below zero; and, though I have never seen it by many degrees so low in Iceland, I can remember many occasions when the cold has appeared to me far more intense. I account for this difference by the serenity of the weather in Canada, and the

awful gales that never cease to blow in Iceland. Often have I been obliged to turn back, finding it useless to attempt to urge my horse against the wind. He was, in fact, unable to stem the storm, which in an instant covered him with icicles and froze the stirrups to my boots.

The force of hail is not to be compared to that of snow, when driving on a comparatively mild day in Iceland. Many exposed spots of ground are left bare the whole winter, and in others hills are formed, that cover every thing

half a century. For the last twenty years the winters had been particularly mild, as, I believe, has been the case in Europe. It seemed it was intended to balance the advantages derived by the people from good weather, by the extraordinary rigour of this winter. This, the majority had strongly impressed upon them, by the great loss they suffered in the death of their cattle. Many were obliged to kill several of their horses; even the bishop, who was probably as well supplied with forage as any farmer, was necessitated to have nine of his slaughtered, for want of food to give them. The winter was even protracted beyond its usual limits, and upon no day in the summer that followed it, did I feel as much heat as in the month of November, on my return to England.

If, however, the days were gloomy, their dreariness was in some measure compensated for by the brilliancy of the nights. I had, some years before, witnessed the Aurora Borealis in the Orkney Isles, and had been struck with its

beauty, yet its partial light in that quarter could bear no comparison with the splendour it assumes in Iceland. There its brightness pervades the whole expanse of the sky, and fills it with a stream of ever-varying colours. During frosty weather it is visible every night, giving even more light than the moon, and it has the additional charm of being continually changing. It is perpetually melting into new forms, and presenting every variety of hue that the eye can fancy; it has, alternately, blue and green mixed with its prevailing pink, which imperceptibly fades into yellow, and as gradually revives and becomes a bright flame-colour.

By the 1st of March, the post-ship reappeared at Reikiavik, and waited only for some letters from the north of the island to return to Denmark. After some days' delay, the men charged with them arrived in a most pitiable state. They had been fourteen days on the way, and had undergone the greatest privations. In crossing the mountains, the cold had been

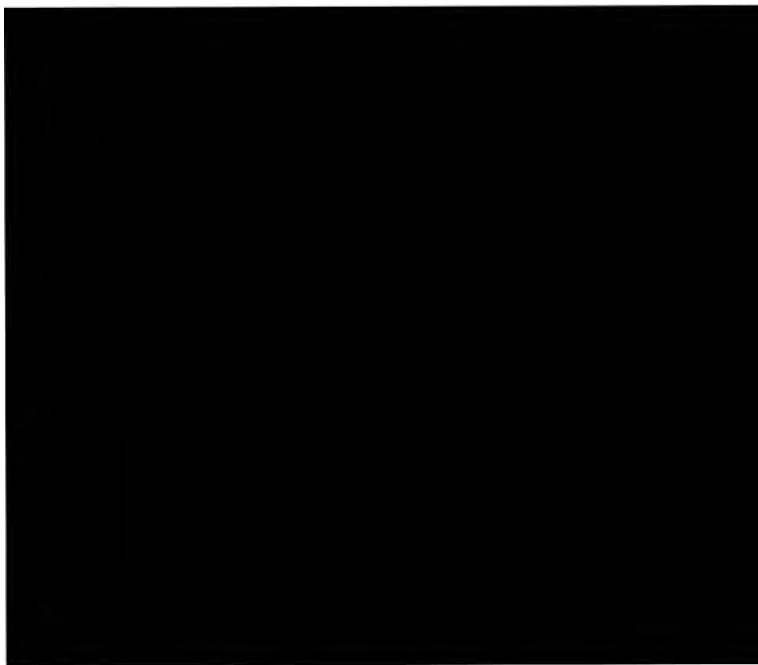
so intense, as to strip the whole of the skin off their faces ; their fingers and toes were so much injured, that they expected to lose several of them, and yet these men were preparing to leave Reikiavik on the delivery of the mail, to enter on a life equally laborious and hazardous. The fishing season had commenced in the south, and they had started before their companions and carried the letters for the paltry remuneration of about fifty shillings. Nothing now delayed the departure of the ship, except the ice that had bound the harbour, when luckily a strong breeze parted it, and in fourteen days she was at anchor in Copenhagen.



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A WINTER IN ICELAND.

CHAPTER X.



or three days the news were favourable, the boats had returned loaded with fish, and every thing raised expectations of a most capital season. Nevertheless, before the week was over, all these delusive hopes vanished ; the weather changed, and remained steadily bad ; the boats were unable to put to sea more than three days in six, and when they did, their nets were carried away or damaged by the storm. The conversation then took a different turn, and each talked of what was due to him by the fishermen, and discussed the chances of his getting paid.

The fishery is principally carried on in the west, and is sufficiently extensive to give employment to many farmers and labourers from Nordland and Osterland, independent of the regular *Soe Bondè*, or sea peasants. Both *Breidè* and *Faxè* Fiords swarm with fish, but altogether the northern coast of *Gulbringè* *Syssell*, from *Havnifiord* to *Kieblivik*, is the most productive part, and it is consequently

crowded from March to May with boats from all parts. For the cod-fishery two different-sized boats are used in this district which is usually called the Strand. The name of the smaller is Boad, it holds two men, and the larger class, termed Skip, requires a crew of six. Both kinds are rigged for sailing, which they do pretty well when right before the wind. They are long and narrow, with a high stem and stern, and altogether are allowed to be good sea-boats.

Immediately on their arrival at the fishing places, the peasants engage to serve in the boats, and the owners select out of each crew a "formadr," whose business it is to summon the men when the weather admits of their going out, and who commands at sea. It is usual for the peasants to bring but little provisions along with them, as, while they remain fishing, their principal food consists of the heads of the fish, which are separated from the bodies immediately on landing them. In places like Kieb—

livik, where the merchants are the chief owners of boats, they have built several houses capable of containing from twenty-four to fifty men each. They are long stone hovels, with berths along the walls, and the same distribution in the loft. Though the wind finds admission in every corner through the loose stones, the men, though drenched by remaining at sea the whole day, seem no way affected by the cold and wet, and are satisfied with a blanket and a little hay for bedding.

The boats continue at sea twelve and eighteen hours together when the weather is at all favourable, and, during that time, the crews do not taste a particle of food. They merely provide themselves with a small keg of *vallè*, a kind of fermented whey, which they find well adapted for cutting the thirst. With a view of keeping as dry as possible, they wear sheepskin dresses over their ordinary clothes, and, by continually smearing them with train oil, they succeed in
them somewhat waterproof, though

the benefit derived by this precaution is not great, as the majority of those employed in fishing are subject to rheumatism, and premature decay is visible in almost all. They appear to be more careful of their hands, and will neither row nor haul in their lines without mittens, which are remarkable for having two thumbs. By this contrivance they are able to turn the side against the palm when saturated with wet, and have the dry part against their fingers. As they carry a dozen or two of these mittens out every day, they are thus enabled to preserve their hands against chafing and chill. By the end of the fishing season they become shrunk, and, being too stiff, are sold for a trifle for exportation.

The partition of the fish depends upon the mode of taking it. When hooks are used, the day's produce is portioned out into eight shares. The formadr divides the whole as equally as possible, and the rest draw lots for their portions. After the six fishermen have been satis-

fied, the two remaining shares go to the owner of the boat, one for the use of the skip, and the other for providing hooks and lines. In the smaller boats the two fishermen and the owner have each a third. When nets have been supplied instead of lines, the shares are increased to twelve, and one half of the whole belongs to the owner. In the Westman Isles, larger vessels, carrying from eight to ten men, are employed, and some few of this kind are used at Reikiavik for taking "haukall," a kind of black shark, eight or ten feet long, from which a considerable quantity of train-oil is drawn.

Towards the end of April, great anxiety began to be felt for the arrival of ships from Denmark, and, in the following month, we were again cheered with the sight of ships which entered the harbour in twos and threes of a day. The wooden jetties were again lowered from the places to which they had been drawn up during the winter, and every one not employed in the

fishery, as well as most of the women, were busy helping to discharge the ships.

We had entered upon summer, which had begun in the middle of April, the Icelandic calendar dividing the year only into summer and winter. The snow had begun to melt, and had flooded the town, yet the frost remained on the ground till the month of July. The shortest day had been of rather less than three hours duration ; and about Christmas, the influence of the sun was so weak as scarcely to give more than twilight. The Icelanders do not reckon the time of day by hours, but by watches of three hours each. Hactei and Midnat denote those that end at twelve o'clock in the day and at night ; and the other divisions are called Otta, which follows midnight, Dagmoul, Midmogen ; Noon, which is from midday to three in the afternoon, Mid-after, and Natmoul.

In the month of May, the occasional appearance of a tolerably bright day, gave indications of the approach of summer, though the advance

of the season was much checked by the drift-ice from Greenland, which began to surround the island.

Among the first arrivals appeared a French corvette. The sensation caused by this unexpected visiter was great, but, unfortunately, there happened to be no one in the town but myself that could speak French; I was, therefore, requested by Mr. Finson, the governor, to interpret for him.

In the morning the captain came ashore, and announced that he had been sent by his government, to make inquiries concerning the loss of a man-of-war brig, called *La Lilloise*, that had been employed in protecting the French fishing-vessels in those seas, and had not been heard of for three years. Every inquiry had been made without success; and, as the last place where she had been seen with certainty was near Vapnifiord in Osterland, it was conjectured that she must have foundered near Iceland, or about the ice that obstructs the

coast of Old Greenland. Another ship had been before sent in search of her, and considerable interest for her fate having been manifested in France, it had been deemed advisable to satisfy public feeling by fitting out a second expedition.

The present ship, which was named *La Recherche*, from the nature of her mission, had undergone such changes in Cherbourg, as would fit her for her present voyage. She was entirely double planked, and was well calculated to resist any slight pressure from the ice. With a view also of making her as manageable as possible, she had been sent out with only four carronades, instead of her whole complement. She brought with her two physicians, who were ordered by the French government to travel over Iceland, and bring back an account of the natural curiosities of the country. One of them had already made a voyage round the world, in the capacity of naturalist of the *Astrolabe*, which Charles X. sent to the South Seas in search of *La Perouse*.

One important point, however, had been neglected, for neither officer nor man could speak any but his native tongue. The men had been pressed at Dunkirk from among the seamen who fish on the coast of Iceland, and some pretended to be able to speak the language of the country fluently; yet, upon one whom they pointed out as their best linguist, being questioned by Mr. Finson, in Icelandic, he did not understand a word of what the latter said; and in his turn addressed him in a jargon in use between the Dutch fishermen and the natives. At first the Frenchman looked rather blank at his discomfiture, but immediately recovering from his confusion walked away, declaring that his antagonist could not speak his native language.

A few days after their arrival, I accompanied the captain and the *savans* to the bishop's house, of whom they made inquiry respecting a priest in Westerland, who had casually said, that a Dutch skipper had told him, that he had

seen La Lilloise founder in Breidè Fiord. As this intelligence, though vague, might be a clue to some discovery, the bishop gave them a letter to Jon Sivertson, the priest, requesting him to give the French officers all the information in his possession concerning the matter.

About this time one of my brothers arrived at Reikiavik, and, as the time was very limited that he could remain with me, I was desirous of getting horses immediately to take him to the Geyser. Every one to whom I mentioned my intention, tried to dissuade me from attempting what might be impossible, and certainly would be attended with many difficulties at that early period of the year. The winter was hardly ended in the interior, the thawing of the snow would render many places impassable, and above all, I was told we should find the greatest difficulty in getting hay.

I therefore gave up at once the idea of entering on such an arduous journey, and we spent the following days in accompanying the

two naturalists in their excursions. One of them determined on giving a dinner on shore to the principal people of the town, and to the officers of *La Recherche* before she left *Reikjavik* for *Westerland*. Much of what was wanted was to be had on board, still fresh provisions would be required, and all that the cook could be supplied with, were the hind-quarters of a calf, not bigger than those of a grass lamb, from which anatomy might have been studied, the muscles being beautifully displayed and perfectly divested of any fat.

The "Chef" had been bent on astonishing the natives, and asked me how people could exist in such a country. He, however, after various shrugs of the shoulders set up a complete *batterie de cuisine*, and having lighted numerous *fourneaux* in the open air, to the imminent peril of the surrounding timber buildings, proceeded to dress a dinner that did infinite credit to his power of availing himself of every thing. The dinner-party consisted of about twenty guests,

among whom were the bishop and other magistrates of the land; and what with Danish, French, and a small quantity of French-latin, all were enabled to join in the conversation.

After the departure of the corvette, the naturalists established themselves on shore, and entered on their researches, the one applying himself to zoology and botany, and the other confining his attention to mineralogy. On one occasion, we accompanied them to the stream at Laugarn that gives the name to Reikiavik, and passed a whole day in trying its temperature in different places, and making experiments by boiling eggs in it. The stream itself is cold, and owes its heat to a spring rising out of a rock in the middle of it, which mixes with the rest of the water and raises its temperature almost to boiling. As it gets distant from the spring the water gradually cools till it flows into the bay, and in its course forms several pools in which the people of the town occasionally bathe. We found that an egg

upon being immersed in the hottest part, could be boiled in eight or ten minutes, according to the depth it was sunk to.

The difference of weather does not affect the temperature of the spring materially, but I have been informed that during heavy rains it is little more than lukewarm. The only purpose that it has been put to is to wash the clothes of the inhabitants of Reikiavik, and to turn a very small mill, the only one I saw in the island. A small timber house has been built close to the spring for the accommodation of those who come to wash, and in general it is to be found full the whole twenty-four hours together, as the distance between it and the town, with the morass to cross, renders it a troublesome business to go backwards and forwards. The course of the brook can be observed from afar by the smoke that skirts it, and the banks the whole way to the sea are covered with verdure, while the plain is still frozen over.

One of the objects that most excited the curi-

osity of the doctors, was a case of leprosy—the only one, I believe, in Reikiavik: we accordingly visited the unfortunate patient in the most miserable of the wretched hovels of the place. After groping through the dark, we came to a small apartment, partially lighted by the smallest possible window. We here found the poor man sitting up in a bed laid on a shelf against the gable over the door at which we entered. The placing him there must have given no little trouble, and it was clear that it was not intended to remove him alive from his present perch; for it could not be called any thing better. He was too horrible an object to look at; his face had almost lost every vestige of features, his eyes had quite disappeared, and most of his fingers and toes had dropped off.

Though he had been afflicted with this terrible scourge for eighteen years, it was only for the last three that the symptoms of his complaint had taken their more deadly appearance, and reduced him to the pitiable state in which

He will still linger some time. His intellect did not seem impaired, nor did he complain, except of a very cold weather. In the same room were several beds, where his family lay; for, as leprosy is not considered contagious, but hereditary, by the Icelanders, they make no objection to the company of persons attacked with it.

This distressing disease is not uncommon in the country; and though I have never known but two cases, I have often been in houses where such persons were living; it was not, however, till afterwards that I became acquainted with the fact, as they dislike strangers to see them. The two Frenchmen, to whom, as physicians, no such objection could be made, told me they had seen as many as five-and-twenty, and that the case at Reikiavik was one of the mildest.

There are several kinds of this disease in Iceland, the most common of which is the one I saw; it is called in Icelandic *Lima-ðalsike*, probably from the falling off of the extremities. Another sort, which covers the body

with horny scales, occurs, but is rare. The general name of the complaint is Spetalska, the same given for leprosy in their bible; it rarely attacks them before the age of forty, when the disease gradually creeps on till the whole flesh is vitiated, and the patient, after many years of loathsome suffering, sinks into the grave, of which he has long before appeared a tenant.

CHAPTER XI.

to the Geysers — Thingvalle — Allmannagíaa —
Hekla — Bruaraa.

and given up all idea of seeing the Geysers. My brother was waiting for the sailing of the ship to Liverpool, when, one morning, I was told that horses were come for me from a clergyman at Thingvalle for the journey. We lost no time in preparing for our departure; a few necessaries in the shape of bread and meat, and bottles of spirits, were packed up in a couple of saddle-bags, and secured on the back of

one of our steeds. I had a horse which I bought on my first arrival ; my brother and the clergyman's son, who was to accompany us, rode two others, and the fifth was allowed to follow loose as a reserve.

Our equipment was none of the smartest, as we had not the means of carrying more than a change of clothes with us. The difficulty we anticipated in procuring forage, made us limit, as much as possible, the number of our horses ; and a blanket strapped over the saddle was the

up a day in summer to the business of clearing it of any stones that have fallen into it. Where the land is swampy, little is done to make it passable, except occasionally a rude causeway is thrown over a few yards of the most dangerous part.

Half-an-hour's ride over a stony plain brought us to the first river we should have to cross. It is called the Lax-aa, or salmon river, and pronounced in Icelandic Laxow; at the ford it divides into three streams, each deep enough to cover a horse's legs, though at this time, from the partial melting of the snow, the current was increased in depth and rapidity. A little below the crossing-place are the salmon-leaps which have given the name to the river. The fishery belongs to the king, and is rented by two merchants in Reikiavik who have established a regular system of taking the fish at stated times. It would be well if the natives would follow their example, as streams producing salmon and trout are numerous all over the island; and it is

only the difficulty of transportation that deters the peasants from giving greater attention to this branch of industry than is necessary for their home consumption.

We continued our route along the coast up to the top of the bay of Reikiavik, and then turned our backs upon the sea, and proceeded to penetrate into the interior. The land improved as we receded from the coast; a few horses were to be seen here and there picking a few blades of last year's grass where a patch of ground was free from snow, which was rare enough, as we found on advancing that the season was much more backward than at Reikiavik. At last, we reached Mosfield, and were glad to conclude our first day's work at four, and escape from the rain which had fallen with scarce any intermission on the whole day.

On alighting, we were conducted by Sir Benedict into his house. After having sat down a few minutes and drank the usual cup of coffee, the clergyman accompanied us to his church

which is contiguous to the parsonage. It had been lately rebuilt under his superintendence, and he seemed rather vain of the edifice, and perhaps with some reason, as it was far better than the generality of places of worship in his country ; and yet it might easily have been mistaken for a small barn. The walls are of alternate layers of peat and stone, and Sire Benedict, after making exertions to get his parishioners to subscribe for a roof of boards, was driven to the necessity of contenting himself with covering the rafters with grass turf, as is usual for their houses. The gables are built of timber, tarred on the outside, but not ornamented with a tower, the solitary bell which summons the congregation being hung inside the church, close to the door. The distribution of the interior is like that of the church at Reikiavik, but on a much smaller scale, as the length of the whole is less than twenty feet. The position of the pulpit in the screen which divides the chancel from the rest of the church, gives an opportunity to the pastor

of addressing both the men and women, who are separated ; the absence also of a loft is a great improvement, as besides being a receptacle for chests and rustic instruments, it generally makes the ceiling so low, as to prevent the clergyman from standing upright in the pulpit, even when it is raised but two feet from the floor.

The altar is a mere wooden cupboard, surrounded by a slight rail of the same material, with a small window on each side. When of-

the wall prevented them giving much light, and the absence of any sort of fireplace, at which to take off the chill of our drenched clothes, rendered the place by no means comfortable. On one side, an opening in the wainscot showed a recess entirely occupied by a bed, the whole furniture of which consisted of a couple of brown blankets that might have been taken for dirty horse-rugs. We crept with some difficulty into this crib, and, bidding stern defiance to its numerous tenants, spent three or four hours in trying to get asleep, a matter of no small difficulty, which we at last succeeded in, notwithstanding the continual noise overhead, and the rank odours that pervaded the house.

Next morning, having got over all the difficulties of starting incidental to Icelandic travelling, by nine o'clock, we proceeded to the nearest farm, where we fed our horses, for Sire Benedict's stock of hay was so reduced by the hardness of the winter, that our beasts had been obliged to begin the march on empty

stomachs. We also loaded the spare horse with a truss of hay, and crept along sometimes in swamps, at others in the beds of rivers. The snow was deep, and thawing rapidly, so that we were soon obliged to abandon our horses, and drive them before us in the rain which fell in torrents. As there was no track, we found the greatest difficulty in keeping them together, and drag them out of holes into which they were every instant floundering up to their necks. We proceeded in this way for six hours before we caught a glimpse of the Lake of Thingvalle after which we had the consolation to know that the worst part of our day's journey was over. A rapid descent down an almost perpendicular hill, brought us close to the water's edge, along which we were enabled to gallop a few miles on good ground towards the stupendous ravine called Almannagíaa.

The whole plain of Thingvalle appears to have been subjected to volcanic eruptions of even more than usual violence. Surrounded by

lofty mountains on every side but that which is washed by the lake, and rent in every direction with fissures of immense depth, it gives the mind, more than any other spot in Iceland, a conception of the extent of subterraneous fire, ready, at any moment, to convert the island into a chaos. It presents a scene that would require the pencil of Martin to do justice to it, and would furnish an idea for the picture of those dreary and awful regions into which the rebellious angels were hurled after their defeat.

Besides numerous inferior rents, the plain is effectually separated from the surrounding country on the east and west by two parallel chasms that run through its whole length. The western, and most considerable, is called Almannagíaa, a name given to it, according to the clergyman of Thingvalle, in the earlier periods of the Icelandic republic, from its being an object of universal attraction to those that came to the Althing. For more than three miles the ground has either sunk or been torn asunder, so

as to leave a chasm a hundred and five feet wide, which runs in a straight line the whole way. The effect is much increased by the whole being disclosed at once to the sight of the traveller, as, on making a sharp turn among some rocks, he beholds a green way enclosed between two natural walls more than a hundred feet below him.

The descent at first appears impossible, for, though the rocks at the extremity of the fissure at which the spectator stands, have formed a kind of staircase, it approaches so nearly to the perpendicular, that a stranger would deny the possibility of a man ascending or descending, much more that of a loaded horse; yet, on dismounting, he will see these animals walk down without the least encouragement. I have heard of persons descending on horseback, but the danger of the beast missing his footing, unless left to his own guidance, is so great, that I should much doubt any one in his senses at tempting any thing of the kind.

Upon reaching the bottom we found ourselves on a flat green surface with a perpendicular wall one hundred and eight feet high on our left hand, and on our right one about forty, leaning considerably outwards. Many large fragments of stone which had fallen from the higher side, were lying scattered in the bottom, and several more of grotesque shapes, standing loose in the hollows of the rock, seemed ready to follow them with the least gust of wind.

After riding about a furlong in the ravine, we turned out of it by an opening in its right side, and entered the plain of Thingvalle. In a few minutes we stood on the banks of the Oxeraa, which after falling in a beautiful cascade from the higher side of Almannagjaa, and continuing its course along it for a short distance, escapes by another opening. The river then separating into two channels, forms the small island on which criminals were formerly executed, and finally loses itself in the lake.

The Oxeraa, though fordable in summer, was

now so swollen, that it was considered advisable to transport our baggage and saddles in a boat. The clergyman of the place rowed to us in a little skiff and ferried us over. This he managed to do by letting the boat drop down the stream obliquely, while our guide swam the horses across a wider part where the current was somewhat less strong.

We examined several caves in the neighbourhood, and found that almost all the fissures ran in the same direction as at Almannagíaa. Most of the narrow clefts are filled with beautifully clear water which reaches within six or seven feet of the surface, and have an underground communication with the lake. A large sort of trout, called Forellur, which abounds in the latter, is caught in great numbers in the holes.

In the morning, while the horses were being saddled, we had a look into the church. In style, it resembles that at Mosfells, but is the most diminutive place of worship I ever recollect being in, and was, moreover, crowded with

chests and piles of stockfish belonging to the priest; a custom, as I remarked elsewhere very common among the Icelanders, who consider it no desecration to put a church to such a use, and make no objection to strangers taking up their lodging in it when they cannot offer them a place in their houses. The one at Thingvalle is not only remarkable for being one of the smallest in the country, but also for a tree which has taken root inside it, and, after passing through the wall, rises to the height of about fifteen feet, and entirely overshadows the entrance. It is the tallest tree that we saw in Iceland, and was pointed out to me as a curiosity. I have been told, however, that at Eyefjord in Nordland, a dozen are to be found that have arrived at the stupendous height of twenty feet.

One of our horses having lost a shoe, the clergyman replaced it with one which he had made the day before. At first, a priest doing such a piece of work appears strange to our notions of clerical dignity; but we must bear in

mind that in all domestic matters the Icelandic priesthood are on a par with the peasantry. On my former trip to the Geysers, I had found the priest busily employed with his son in the smithy teaching him how to make horse-shoe nails; and I suppose it was finding some other member of the same profession employed in like manner that made a traveller assert, that the clergy in Iceland are not only all farriers, but also the best in the land. I cannot deny that the personal appearance of Sire Biorn, of Thingvalle, might have led a stranger to take him for a journeyman blacksmith, and one too who was not paid the highest wages. His long black hair and beard of a fortnight's growth were by no means set off by an antique blue jacket and trousers; yet, upon further acquaintance, it was easy to perceive by his conversation that he was a man of education and considerable learning.

A second ravine, called "Hrapnagíaa," or the Chasm of Ravens, which, though not so formi-

able in appearance, is perhaps more difficult of passage than Almannagíaa, forms the other key to Thingvalle Sveit, as it is called. As we ascended, after leaving it, into the passes between the mountains, we had a beautiful view of the lake with its lofty islands of Sandey and Nesey, with the waterfall of the Oxeraa in the distance. The weather had become more favourable, and, as we jogged along, our way was enlivened by numberless ducks that sought the lake, and occasionally by the flutter of ptarmigans, that were so tame as scarce to move out of our track.

Before beginning our descent into the plain of Laugar Valle, we stopped a few minutes at a curious volcanic crater called Tin Tron, which presents the perfect form of a chimney-top, about fifteen feet aboveground. The orifice is much reddened by the effect of fire; and though not more than sufficient to admit a man, it gradually widens into a large cavern. Upon

reaching this spot, Mount Hekla bursts at once into sight. Though the most famed, it is one of the least of the "Jokuls" or mountains of Iceland ; of those whose heights are ascertained, Snœfield Jokul and Eyefiall both dispute the palm, and it is probable that many in the interior surpass both these mountains by some hundred of feet. The summit of Hekla is reckoned to be four thousand three hundred feet above the level of the sea, while that of Snœfield Jokul is upwards of four thousand five hundred. Though the eruptions of Hekla have been the most frequent (it having had ten since the colonization of the island), other volcanoes have caused far greater devastation. In the last great eruption of 1783, Hekla took no part ; the mountains in the neighbourhood of Skaptaa were then the principal Jokuls in action. Though the recorded eruptions are numerous, it is probable that by far the most terrible convulsions of nature, and those that have most

tended to change the face of the country, had taken place before it was known to the Norwegians.

Laugar Valle presents a more tame appearance than the plain we left behind us; but it is far more valuable, as the pasturage is good and the Lichen *Icelandicus* abounds in most parts of it. On our right we had another sheet of water called Apu Vatn, along the shore of which were visible long columns of smoke arising from boiling fountains. In the afternoon we entered Efstadal, and concluded our third day's journey within a few miles of the Geysers. We stopped for the night at the Hreppstjore's house, which were our best quarters since we left Reikiavik. His wife, Helga, with whom I was already acquainted, brought us some boiled mutton, and made us as comfortable as was in her power. The feast that she set before us was the more welcome as we feared that our provisions might run short, if too much broken in upon before our arrival at our destination, and we

well knew that it might be next to impossible to procure a further stock. We had the additional comfort of finding ourselves in a clean house; and, after spending the remainder of the day in climbing the mountains, at the foot of which the farm lay, of retiring to rest in a decent room.

Our horses had not fared better than ourselves, and they now began to show that the work was too hard for them, after being starved the whole winter. We had already left one at Laugar Valle, and another was so knocked up on arriving at Efstadal that we determined on leaving him there till our return, and hiring another to take us to the Geysers. The road improved as we advanced, and gave us an opportunity of cantering over the dry plains between Efstadal and the river Bruaraa. We had here to cross a waterfall of very peculiar form. The cascade is broken in the middle by a cleft in the rock about fifteen feet wide, by which the greatest body of water is directed towards the

centre, as in the case of the horseshoe fall at Niagara. Over this opening there formerly existed a natural bridge, whence the river got its name; a lady who lived at Skalholt, however, disliking the facility it gave to travellers of coming to that place, was selfish enough to cause the arch to be broken down, little foreseeing that she would be drowned at a later period in crossing this very spot. For many years after, every one was obliged to cross half a mile below the fall in boats, till a wooden frame was placed across this kind of sluice. On coming to the bank at the edge of the fall, we forced our horses through the river to the platform, and then into the stream again till we reached the opposite side. The greatest care must be taken as the depth varies from two to four and five feet, and the rapidity of the current is apt to frighten young horses, who will often stop at the most critical part and refuse to cross the frame. This hesitation on the part of the

horse is sure to put his rider's life in great jeopardy, and, should the animal be restive, nothing will save his being taken off his legs, and swept down a fall of fifty feet.

About two miles lower down is a ferry, at a place called Spoastader, where all travellers cross, on their way from the west to Skalholt. This spot was, in the fifteenth century, the scene of an outrage, not unlike those of Lynch law, in practice in these days in some parts of America ; and as it exhibits a contrast to the usual veneration for the clergy in those times, I will here insert the account of it given by a descendant of the principal actor in it.

John Gerrichson, who is stated by some to have been by birth a Dane, was Provost of Westeras, in Sweden ; and, in 1409, was made Archbishop of Upsala, by Eric, of Pomerania, king of the three Northern kingdoms of Sweden, Norway, and Denmark. The appointment produced great discontent, particularly as the new prelate, before long, was guilty of various of-

fences. Among other charges of a disgraceful nature, one of peculation to the amount of 20,000 ducats was brought against him, and so bad was his general conduct that he was deposed, and even the Pope consented to his removal from his see. After his degradation, he retired to Denmark. At a later period, the Swedes gave his appointment to the see of Upsala, as a reason for their revolting against Eric. Unable to advance his favourite at home, the king made him afterwards Bishop of Skalholt, in Iceland. He accordingly sailed thither in 1421 from England, where he had collected thirty men, principally Irishmen, who were to act as his body-guard. Under the protection of these braves, he travelled about his bishopric, plundering and committing various acts of violence. Emboldened by his success, he sent men to seize two rich landowners, Teit Gunlogson, of Bjarnanes in Osterland, and Thorward Löftson, of Mödrevalle in Nordland, and to bring them to Skalholt. They were there

put in irons, confined in a dark dungeon, and forced to do the work of the meanest slaves. During the autumn, however, Thorward contrived, through some unknown means, to effect his escape. The next year at Easter, during the festivities, the jailers shared so largely in the general drunkenness, as to forget or lose their keys. A servant-girl found them and brought them to the remaining prisoner, who thus escaped and returned home. For this service Teit rewarded his deliverer with a good farm, and helped her to make an advantageous marriage.

Both the peasants being now at liberty, entered into a correspondence, the object of which was to obtain revenge, not only for the harsh treatment which both had suffered, but also to chastise the bishop for a still greater indignity inflicted on Thorward's wife. The following circumstances also urged them on in their project.

A short time before these occurrences, one

Magnus, connected with the bishop's body-guard and supposed to be his son, made love to Margrete, a young and handsome lady, the daughter of Vigfus Holm, a noble Norwegian, at that time Lehnshövding of Iceland, but met with a decided repulse. The villain revenged himself by attacking Kirkebol, a farm in Gulbringe Syssel, where Margrete resided with her brother Ivar Holm. The latter was slain and the house set on fire. The damsel, however, escaped from the burning pile through an oven in the bath-room. Under cover of the smoke and the darkness of the night, she quitted the farm unperceived, threw herself on an almost unbroken colt, and thus gave her pursuers the slip. Having reached Oedfiord in Nordland, she made a solemn vow to marry the man who should avenge her brother's death and the violence offered to herself. The murderer and incendiary, Magnus, fled the country immediately after perpetrating this act. Thorward, however, determined to visit his crime on the heads of his

accomplices, and thus at the same time to do himself justice, and gain the reward offered by Margrete.

In furtherance of their plan, Thorward and Teit agreed to meet at Skalholt, at the feast of St. Thorlak, which occurs on the 20th of July, as they considered it certain that the bishop would be at home at that time, for it was usual for him to officiate himself in the cathedral on this holiday, which was kept solemn throughout the island; nor were they disappointed in their expectations. When the time came, they each brought with them a large troop of powerful and well-armed men. The bishop was standing at the high altar, with the chalice and holy wafer in his hands, surrounded by priests in full pontificals, when notice was given him of his enemies being in the neighbourhood. He instantly felt that his end was not far off, and that there was little hope of mercy from those whom he had so cruelly ill-treated; he, however, attempted to defend himself by

having the doors of the church closed. So slight an obstacle did not long retard the conspirators; attacking the doors with great violence, they soon made them give way. Fifty of the most daring, led on by Arne Magnusson, a peasant from Nordland, rushed into the church in complete armour; they flew on the bishop, and dragged him from the altar, notwithstanding the endeavours of the priests, who clung to him and tried to hold him back. In the middle of the cathedral the holy wafer fell from his hand, and the parish priest, throwing himself on the ground, took it up in his mouth. When arrived at the church-tower, the bishop and his persecutors stopped a while, and he asked for some drink; one of his attendants was despatched to procure him what he asked for, and returned with a silver cup filled with old mead, which Gerrichson drained to the bottom. This done, they removed him, while he implored them to save his life; a request

they had little intention of complying with. His episcopal habit was brought to him, and his guards and servants sought every where, as well in the church as the houses in Skalholt. The treatment these men received took away all hopes from the bishop, for they were cut down and shot in various ways.

Gerrichson himself was reserved for a different fate; carried to the ferry of the Bruaraa, he was put into a sack with a heavy stone fastened to it, thrown into the river, and in a few minutes drowned. The conspirators then quietly returned each to his own home, and, strange to tell, not one of them was subjected to any legal prosecution, nor did any person attempt to punish the murder of the bishop and his many attendants, or the foul desecration of the church and feast. At that period anarchy prevailed in Denmark, as well as in Iceland; indeed, the whole of the three northern kingdoms were nearly in the same lawless state. Eric of Po-

merania's wars with his vassals and subjects, left him no time to attend to the more insignificant broils of the Icelanders, and his former favourite was left unavenged—a fate not altogether undeserved. His misdeeds in Iceland, and the infamy of his character before he came there, might in those days, perhaps, have palliated the crime of his murderers, and many, no doubt, considered “his taking off” a benefit conferred on the country; the common people, however, believed that those who assisted at this tragedy were all visited with various judgments by Heaven. The catholics abroad even attempted to raise him to the rank of a saint or a martyr. He was buried in the middle of the church, in the spot where the host fell from his hands; and the bodies of the Irishmen whom he had brought over were deposited in the neighbourhood of Skalholt, in a place called to this day, from that circumstance, “Iragerde.”

Shortly after his return home, Thorward Löft-

son claimed the hand of Margrete, who kept her promise and married him. They both lived in undisturbed peace and happiness, and became the ancestors of a numerous and yet unextinguished progeny.

CHAPTER XII.

The Great Geyser—The Strokr.

THE Geysers are situated in the valley of Haukadal, on a table land slightly elevated, and chiefly formed of loose stones and incrustations, thinly covered with mould. The spot in which the springs are clustered together is, though in the middle of a swamp, remarkably dry, and only partially covered with grass. If all the pools and jets be reckoned, I doubt whether they would fall short of one hundred and fifty ;

and when we consider that they are all contained within the space of about twenty acres of ground, it is difficult to come to any other conclusion than that the whole place is a crust, covering a boiler with numberless safety-valves; and the communication between the springs, is rendered more probable, by an increased agitation frequently affecting the whole number simultaneously.

The first object that presents itself is a shallow stream, fed by the overflowing of a pool of unfathomable depth, which has the power of incrusting whatever is left in its current. Even its bed has undergone this process, and might be mistaken for white cement, as well as various woollen stockings and mittens that have been left there purposely. Passing by this stream and the New Geyser, we pitched our tent between the latter and the Great Geyser. This new domicile was inconveniently small, being but four feet high, and supported on three staves, little longer than ordinary walking-sticks.

When our saddles and great-coats had been deposited inside, there was just sufficient room for three of us to sit in it with our feet outside. Yet I doubt whether a larger tent would have served us better; for though so low, we had the greatest difficulty in preventing its being every minute blown over, by heaping stones on the pegs that had no firm hold in the ground.

The principal fountain, the Great Geyser, is at the extremity of the eminence, and is a little more elevated than the rest of the ground. On every side but that near to the New Geyser, the descent is precipitous, and from the loose incrustations that cover it, perfectly inaccessible. The basin resembles a shallow bowl, gradually deepening to the orifice of the pipe in the centre, where it reaches the depth of three feet. Its form would be circular but for an indentation in its circumference, which reduces its prevailing diameter of fifty-six feet to forty-six at this part. The pipe, as low as the eye can discern, is perfectly round, and about twelve feet across.

I have been told, that its depth has been ascertained to be more than sixty feet, a measurement that must have been attended with much difficulty, and a little uncertainty, from the disturbance of the boiling water.

When we arrived, the basin was full of water, with a little running down the side by which we approached it. Two hours after, we felt a slight shaking of the ground, and on rushing out of the tent, we saw the water of the Great Geyser, elevated about forty feet. When it had continued about five minutes in a state of eruption, the water sank into the pipe and left the basin bare. Two or three minutes sufficed to dry it perfectly, and we were able to walk into it, with no other inconvenience than the heat of the bottom, which penetrated very sensibly through the soles of our shoes. The north wind, however, which was blowing with great violence, rapidly lowered the temperature of the stone, and the surface assumed a light gray colour. In the middle it is comparatively

smooth, and but slightly granulated, like frost-work; but on the outside and edge protuberances abound, which have much the character of heads of cauliflower. On the removal of any of these excrescences by a slight blow of the hammer, the spot from which they have been detached presents a surface analogous to, but somewhat rougher than, that of the interior of the basin.

The water gradually rose in the pipe after the explosion, and at the end of four hours was so high as to run over. A slight bubbling was perceptible in the middle, where the heat was greatest, and a thick smoke, accompanied by a sulphureous smell, shrouded the whole pool, which, but for its beautiful transparency, might have reminded one of the Stygian lake. Various indications were given by it of a second eruption, by the water occasionally being disturbed, and alternately rising and falling; yet, with the exception of one jet, from

four to five feet high, this Geyser remained quiet during the night.

The year before, I had witnessed a far more beautiful eruption of the great Geyser. It was of more than ten minutes' duration, and presented a column, or rather pyramid of, at least, ninety feet in height. The day happened to be calm, and consequently the jet was not broken into parts. After raging with incredible fury, it at once burst, and leaving the basin empty, deluged the outside with hot water, which running down in numberless rills joined again in a stream, winding round the foot of the Geyser. It is by the water thus detained in the hollows that the cauliflower-like incrustations are formed and gradually build up the rim of the basin.

The apparent altitude of a mass of water fluctuating every second is, of course, very deceptive; but, on the whole, judging of the height of the pyramid by the proportion that it bore to its base, I should say that it fell little short of

ninety feet. The immense masses of vapour which accompany the boiling water prevent the possibility of following the jets with the eye through their whole length; but this circumstance rather increases than otherwise the beauty and grandeur of the phenomenon, which surpasses the power of representation with the pencil.

It has been remarked that persons are often disappointed at the first sight of another wonder of nature—the Falls of Niagara. The mind requires some time to appreciate the immensity of the cataract presented to the eyes, and till it has arrived at that point, it is little more affected by this than any other great mass of descending water. But the first glance at the Geyser is all-absorbing and holds the spectator as it were under the influence of a spell, only broken by the final bursting of the giant column. Another feature which, I think, makes it superior to Niagara, is that of its being unique, and offering a spectacle for which the eyes have not been

prepared by any inferior phenomenon of the same kind. I had seen waterfalls of surpassing beauty in different parts of Europe, and on beholding the Horseshoe was drawn insensibly into comparisons between it and other falls in respect to the relative height, beauty of surrounding scenery, and many other points. The consideration of all these, takes away from the intensity of the admiration of the principle object; but as the nearest approach to the eruption of the Geyser, that I had ever seen, was the bursting of a fire-plug in the streets of London; and as even the best representations of it in painting had given me but a faint image of its living activity, the unexpected tremour that pervaded the site of the springs, followed by the rush of water that dashed into the air with the velocity of lightning, left me no power to do more than gaze with rivetted eyes on this stupendous display of nature.

The mount that forms the substructure of the basin is covered with innumerable small aper-

tures, some of which throw out steam, and others tiny jets, six inches high, at intervals of two or three minutes. Many of these cavities are filled with boiling clay, of a vermillion colour, while in others mud, of various shades of blue and red, is boiling with the greatest vehemence. In most places, it is sufficient to thrust in a stick to form a new spring. Of petrifications the grass is the most beautiful, taking its tints from the colour of the water it lies in. A delicate pink and bright red are the prevailing hues, and in patches where pure water only passes over them, the herbs are still alive, though their stalks are perfectly incrustated.

The day was now far advanced, and the weather had grown so severe as to force us to keep inside the tent. We therefore agreed to watch in turns, and to make the rounds of the two great springs every half-hour. About nine o'clock in the evening, as we were drinking a cup of coffee, made with Geyser water, which we found perfectly tasteless, a young man made

his appearance among the springs. He had been shooting in the neighbourhood, and sold us a brace of wild ducks he had fallen in with. In answer to our inquiries about the New Geyser, he told us it had not thrown up water more than twice during the winter, and that its motion was very uncertain. He added, that we might have a chance of forcing it to display its power by choking it with earth. We immediately sprung up and collected sufficient grass turf and peat to fill a large waggon. This we brought close to the edge of the orifice—for this Geyser is merely a round hole, without basin, about ten feet in diameter, with water boiling at a depth of fifteen feet.

The mass of earth being heaped on the weather side of the fountain, we all three, on a given signal, tumbled the whole of it into the pipe. For a second or two the boiling ceased, the water then suddenly rose to the top, and, darting into the air, formed a column about one hundred and twenty feet high. The turf

we had cast in, was hurled out, and lifted even higher than the water. There was, however, much more steam than water, and the violence of the eruption far exceeded that of the greater spring. I have often since been reminded of it by seeing the steam let out of a high-pressure engine. The column was also much less in diameter than in the case of the Great Geyser, and differed but little in circumference in different parts. For five-and-thirty minutes it continued in one uninterrupted jet, tossing up large stones, which, as we threw them at the column, were caught up and projected as out of a cannon. The side opposed to the wind kept perpendicular, totally unaffected by the blast; but to leeward the ground was drenched with the condensed steam for a couple of hundred yards, and strewed with the fibres of turf which had been divested of earth during their continuance in the pipe. Gradually the column, which at first was as black as ink, became paler, and, during the latter half of the eruption, was as white as

that of the Great Geyser. Though after thirty-five minutes' duration, the continued stream failed ; yet occasional jets, some of which exceeded the former in height, were thrown up for a quarter of an hour after. As its last efforts died away we attempted a renewal of the phenomenon, by repeating the experiment, but could elicit no more than an increased roaring from the exhausted volcano.

This spring is, in general, more admired by the Icelanders than the Great Geyser. Its superior height, and the greater violence which it exhibits, and chiefly the longer duration of its explosions, certainly justify their choice ; in which, however, I believe, few travellers agree with them. Both have their peculiar beauties : the one pleases by its slender proportions, and the other astonishes by its colossal bulk ; and they equally serve to show how insignificant the proudest works of art are when compared with those of nature. Had Louis XIV. seen the wonders of the vale of Haukadal, he could

never again have looked with satisfaction on Les Grandes Eaux de Versailles.

The height of these two fountains have been estimated variously by travellers, who have differed in the calculation from three hundred and forty to seventy feet. Sir John Stanley measured them with a sextant, and ascertained the Great to be ninety-six, and the New one hundred and thirty feet high when he saw them. Of course the eruptions vary a little every day, yet from all accounts that I have had from the natives, it appears that neither have lost much or gained for many years.

The New Geyser is called, in Icelandic, "Strokr," which signifies the piston of a churn, or an agitator, and the word Geyser is restricted by them to the greater fountain. It is derived from the verb *geisa*, the meaning of which corresponds more with the French word *jaillir* than any term in our own language.

The cavity that feeds the petrifying rill is one of peculiar beauty: it is filled to the brim with

the clearest water imaginable, of a temperature bordering on boiling, and of unfathomable depth. We could see that its sides expanded as it deepened, and that the spot we stood upon was no more than a fantastic crust, not a foot thick, extending over this vast caldron, whose limits we could only guess at. Across it a natural arch, about three inches wide, connects the two sides, probably left when the openings, which discover the cavity and reveal its beauties, were formed by the falling in of the ground. Over this bridge of Alsirat the young sportsman stepped, repeatedly, backwards and forwards, probably with no great danger to himself, but certainly with no pleasant sensations to the nerves of the spectators, who expected to see him plunged in the boiling gulf below, from which no human power could have withdrawn him alive.

During the night we watched anxiously for a renewal of the spectacle of the day, which had scarce closed on us by half-past eleven ;

and, nothing more appearing, we struck our tent, and began our retreat. We were hard pressed for time, or would have willingly remained another day on the spot, and taken advantage of the fine weather that was beginning to show itself. We soon got to Elfstadal, and finding the Hreppstjore and his family were at church, we merely left the horse we had borrowed, and hurried on to Middal. On approaching this place we found the plain filled with horses. The young people of the parish were being confirmed, and an unusually large attendance at church was the consequence. On a dry spot about a hundred men and women's saddles had been piled in heaps, to give the horses the liberty of grazing. The little church resounded with psalms, and when the service was concluded, the clergyman came out, and received the individual thanks of each parishioner for his sermon.

We that night staid at Lauger Valle, and were hospitably entertained by the farmer with

whom I had left my horse. We fared sumptuously on fresh lamb and swan's eggs, and, in addition to this substantial dinner, had "skior," a kind of curds turned acid, which, at this time of the year, was a delicacy that could not be offered but by the more wealthy farmers. A wedding was shortly to take place, and a degree of merriment seemed to reign in the house which is seldom met with among the Icelanders, who are serious to a fault.

At the bottom of the "toon" which bordered the lake, called Apu Vatn, a hot spring rose in the lake, and warmed the water round it for about fifty yards. The water is not thrown up at any time to a greater height than four feet, and in wet weather it scarcely rises above the level of the lake. Unlike the Geysers, it is in continual action. The land at the edge of the water is slightly tinged with yellow, and a faint smell of brimstone (though none can be detected by the taste) issues from the Hverr, as this kind of spring is called in Ice-

landic. A much larger one was visible at some miles distance on the other side of the lake, that gave, by its smoke, the appearance of animation to the scene, which was otherwise a vast desert.

The next morning we continued our journey back to Thingvalle, cheered by the singing of our boy Biorn Thorlakson, who made the passes re-echo with his modulations. His songs, however, were not of the same nature as those with which the Spanish muleteer beguiles the way. Biorn confined himself to hymns, and chanted the Icelandic mass with no little self-complacency, as he was intended for the church, and was already prepared to proceed with his studies at Bessestad.

In the afternoon we reached the Oxeraa, and not wishing to be delayed by stopping with the priest of Thingvalle, we plunged into the stream. We got over safely ourselves; but the horse that was loaded with our clothes and the remainder of our provisions, approached too

near the opening of the Almannagíaa, and was borne away by the current. Before he could recover, he was turned over by the stream, and thoroughly immersed. After some delay, he reached the shore, and with him the unfortunate saddle-bags filled with water. We made a hasty retreat into Almannagíaa, and commenced an inquiry into the amount of damage. The greater part of the eatables were rendered unfit for use, and the clothes were not only drenched, but dyed with coffee and other adjacent articles. Our most annoying loss was the destruction of many of the petrifications, particularly the brilliant clays. They had all returned to their original liquid state, and imparted their hues to the linen next them. Luckily, the most precious had been laid up in small valises attached to our saddles, and had escaped the general calamity; while a small cask of Geyser water was the only thing on the sumpter-horse that remained uninjured. After restoring some order to our baggage, we ascended the ravine out of

Almannagíaa, and stopped for the night some miles further, at a place called Heide Bai.

The cottage here was so small and wretched, that we preferred borrowing a tent to passing the night where the fish was kept, which was the only apartment untenanted. There was some trouble in selecting a spot on the toun free from snow. This difficulty we overcame, but not so easily another more serious one, the getting some supper. The people of the house could offer us nothing but "afbrost" (the milk of a cow that has newly calved, boiled down to a consistency), and this said afbrost, *ne se laissait pas manger*, for it resembled Indian rubber. A bottle of brandy and some cigars still remained, and on these we feasted, for want of better fare, and then retired to lie on the saddles in the tent.

Biorn, like other Icelanders, was no smoker, though he was devoted to the weed under another form; he therefore sought for consolation in a pinch of snuff. This is the luxury the most

valued by his countrymen after brandy ; I might almost put it on a par with that drink to which many are but too strongly attached ; and very few, after they come to man's estate, are unprovided with a "boik," or snuffbox, in the form of a powder-horn. Ivory, or the tooth of a walrus, mounted in silver, are the favourite materials for it, and from the small end a plug is drawn, which is attached to the box by a silver chain. Through this aperture a teaspoonful of coarse snuff, which might be mistaken, both by its grain and smell, for tan, is shaken on the back of the hand, from whence it is eagerly sniffed up, and the dose repeated every five minutes. I leave the reader to judge how this habit, religiously persevered in, together with a beard of a fortnight's growth, must improve the appearance.

During the night it froze hard, and when we rose at four, the cold was bitter ; the keen air gave us an appetite which it was out of our power to satisfy, so we at once began our

march. Our horses had fared no better than ourselves, and, having been locked up in stables without roofs, were nearly frozen. Walking was preferable, under these circumstances, to riding; and when we reached Mosfell, the horse that had been the most distressed on the way to the Geysers, was so completely knocked up, that we were obliged to leave him behind. We soon got in sight of the sea, and, by four o'clock in the afternoon, were again in Reikiavik, and not before our time, as my brother had to go on board that evening, and, before ten o'clock, was on his way to Liverpool.

CHAPTER XIII.

Esiuberg—Skalholt—Eruption of Skapta Yokul, 1783.

THE earliest Christian church in Iceland was erected, long before the general introduction of that religion, at Esiuberg, near the heathen temple of Kialarness. It is clear that from the first settlement of the island, many of the colonists disapproved of the barbarities committed in the pagan temples, and looked with horror on human sacrifices. One young man, named Biorn, carried his hatred to them so far as to set

the temple of Kialarness on fire, and destroyed with it the idols, that formed the principal ornament of the place.

One Orlyger Rapson, at the particular injunction of a holy man, named Patrick, who converted him, and provided him with the requisite timber, built a little church at Esiuberg, and dedicated it to St. Columba. After his death, his descendants continued in the same faith, though unbaptized, and appeared to have belonged to the sect of the Cuddees, of whom Patrick, in all probability, was one.

Till long after this event Skalholt was of such little consequence as to be passed over without notice in the Landnamma-bok, which gives a very minute account of the first settlers, and of the places they selected for their habitations. The first man who built a house there was Gissur Teitsson, a man of consideration, and the most zealous advocate for the introduction of the Christian religion. This man, in the eleventh century, took up his residence at Skal-

holt, and with a view of fitting his son, Islief, for a priest, sent him to study at Herfuda, now Hervorden, in Westphalia.

In the year 1055 Islief was elected first bishop by the Icelanders, and after living on his father's estate, left it to his son and successor, Gissur, who gave his land and other property towards the erection of a bishopric. This Gissur also induced the Icelanders, in 1096, to agree to pay tithes, one quarter of which were to belong to the bishop. Gradually the see became enriched by various donations, chiefly of landed property. The original cathedral, which was only thirty ells in length, was pulled down, and one of larger proportions, and more costly in its decorations, was substituted by Bishop Kloeng, about a hundred years after Islief's election. The church appears by this time to have acquired considerable revenues, for at the consecration of this second edifice, the prelate not only presented to it vessels of gold and jewels, but entertained eight hundred and forty guests, and on their

taking leave, conferred rich gifts on those of rank.

The Icelandic clergy having thought proper to add the name of Thorlak Thorhalleson to the list of Saints, a handsome chapel was built for the reception of his shrine, which is said to have been richly ornamented with jewels. The riches, however, which had accumulated from the offerings of the devotees, were gradually wasted or carried out of the country by the many foreigners who became bishops of Skalholt during the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries. Plagues, famines, and other misfortunes, to which the country has been peculiarly subject, combined to reduce the revenue of the See; yet Ogmund Paulson, the last Catholic who held it, was in possession of much larger property than is found at this time in the hands of one individual. In the enumeration of his various riches, besides numerous farms and four hundred and eighty horses, there is such a long account of the cloth in his house, as to make it resemble

the catalogue of a wholesale linen and woollen draper's sale.

A difference of opinion between him and Jon Aræson, Bishop of Holum, caused so much hatred between the two, that each prelate excommunicated the other, and prepared for a civil war. Ogmund and Jon met at the Althing, near the Oxeraa, the former accompanied by fifteen hundred and sixty horsemen, and the latter by one thousand and eighty. After much mediation by the chief men of the land, the bishops came to an agreement to settle their dispute by single combat between two champions chosen by each party. This mode of decision had been declared illegal as far back as A.D. 1011, in consequence of a fatal duel between two illustrious Scalds, named Gunlög and Rafn. The combat, nevertheless, took place on the first of July, on an island in the river Oxeraa, but no life was lost, and Jon's champion, a Norlander, being declared conquered, a final reconciliation took place.

The next day, the church of Skalholt was burnt by lightning, and all the ornaments and riches it contained were destroyed. Ogmund immediately set about repairing the loss, and in ten years' time had built another cathedral. This bishop becoming blind, while on a journey, chose for his successor Gissur Einarson, who introduced the Lutheran religion into Iceland; having already been converted in secret before his nomination. The same consequences followed the Reformation here, as in England. In 1539, one Dederik von Minden, a Hamburgher, was sent over as commissioner to sequester the property of the religious houses.

Having taken possession of Vidoe, near Reikiavik, one of the best monasteries, he proceeded to Osterland, to follow up his operations in that quarter. While passing through Skalholt, he had some quarrel with Ogmund, and made use of harsh and insolent language. While drinking with his followers, he was surprised by Jon Refr (fox), and a band

of armed men, and after a desperate resistance, killed, with seven of his suite. Ogmund was naturally suspected of being the instigator of this massacre, particularly as his people had already, while he was priest of Breide Bolstadir, in 1510, fallen upon a Danish magistrate, while travelling, and killed two, and wounded more of his followers. The next year, however, he solemnly denied any participation in the act at the Althing, and then left the episcopal residence, but continued to oppose the Reformation with all his power.

King Christian III., to hasten its progress, sent over two men of war, under the command of Christopher Hvitfeldt, governor of Trondhjem, who had already succeeded in overthrowing popery in Norway. When this nobleman had found that no opposition was made to him on the southern coast of Iceland, he sent fourteen armed horsemen to Arnæs Syssel, when they seized the Bishop, now eighty years of age, and carried him off from Hjalle, his sister Asdise's farm. In the hopes of being set at liberty, the old man gave

Hvitfeldt large sums of money and promised to give up some of his landed property : but, notwithstanding this and his sister's entreaties, he was carried to Denmark, and died the year after in Soröe monastery, where he was confined by the king's order.

After some years spent in disputes of the same kind, in which the bishops of the two provinces appeared frequently in arms, and besieged each other, the contest ended in the death of Jon Arceson, who was beheaded, with his two sons, on a rock on the northern side of the farm-house at Skalholt.

In 1551 the Reformation was finally established, and with part of the funds of the See, a Latin school was established at Skalholt, where it continued till 1785, when the great eruption of Skapta-fell's Jokul, together with the hard winters and earthquakes, did so much damage to the property of the church, that provisions could no longer be procured for the school; and the bishopric's lands, consisting of three hundred farms, were sold by auction, and the proceeds

placed in the king's chest, from which the salary of the bishop and expenses of the college were to be paid. Finnur Jonson, the Icelandic historian, at that time bishop, bought the house, and the cathedral dwindled into a chapel, annexed to the parish of Torvostad. His son, Hans Finson, last bishop of Skalholt, died here in 1796, and the decayed remains of the old buildings, that had been, in great measure, overthrown in the earthquakes of 1784, were finally removed. Skalholt is, therefore, now nothing more than a common peasant's farm-house, and has returned to exactly the same state it was in eight hundred years ago.

The event that caused this change, was one of the severest calamities that Iceland has suffered, subject as it has frequently been to convulsions of nature. No volcanic eruption, since its colonization, has been so extensive or attended with such disastrous effects. Of the thirty-eight years, immediately following 1316, no less than six are noted in the year books as memorable for earthquakes, tempests, and volcanic

eruptions, which destroyed the cattle, overthrew the farm-houses, and rendered land, hitherto useful, unavailable for pasture. Yet these combined were scarcely equal to the last great eruption, that occurred in 1783, and of which a minute report, with all its consequences, has been drawn up by Magnus Stephenson, by order of Christian VII.

Though the whole land suffered, the part of it the most immediately affected, was the Syssel of Skapta-fell, in the south-east. No portion of the island is more covered with Jokuls than Osterland, and so inaccessible are they that many are unknown to this day. Between them and the sea, the vallies, before this date, were productive enough; and in Catholic times two monasteries had existed, not far from the coast called Kirbubai and Thukebai, whose lands now belong to the king. The part nearest to the Jokuls, was called Sida, and some lofty plains, where the people of the district had a

common right of pasture for their cattle, went under the name of Sidamanna Afrettur.

Among the rivers that water this quarter, the largest is the Skaptà, which takes its name from the mountain, and rises about seven Icelandic (thirty English) miles north of Sida.

It may be as well to notice here, that the natives divide their rivers into two classes, from the difference of their waters: those that descend immediately from the Jokuls, and those whose sources are in the lesser mountains, whose tops are below the line of perpetual congelation. The water of the latter is of the usual colour, whereas that of the former bears the closest resemblance to milk, which is produced by the mixture of comminuted chalk. The rapidity of these rivers is such that they are not able to deposit any great portion of this colouring matter in their course. Several of the larger torrents have been called "Hvità" (white river) by the early settlers, and still retain the name. In

Egyl's Saga, Skallgrim and his companions are reported to have been struck with amazement at the sight of this water ; Olafson, however, remarks, that Söndmör, in Norway, the birth-place of Skallgrim, presented, in his day, the same phenomenon.

The spring of 1783 had been remarkably mild ; clear still weather, with frequent sunshine, and a prevalence of southerly winds, had advanced the vegetation so much, that plants had made an unusual progress by the month of May—in short, every thing promised a favourable summer and a good harvest ; but all these prospects disappeared with the month.

Already a blueish mist in the sky had drawn the attention of the more observant. Many were speculating on the cause of this phenomenon, when the first of June was ushered in with an earthquake over Skapta-fells Syssel, that was repeated daily the whole week. On the eighth, a dark bank appeared in the air,

moving over Sida, from the north ; it was soon followed by a shower of ashes, that covered the ground to the thickness of an inch. Noises also were heard issuing from the mountains, like waterfalls and the boiling of vast cauldrons. For two days the bank remained stationary ; on the third it rose higher in the air, and discovered columns of fire issuing out of the Jokuls, accompanied by frequent shocks of the earth. The Skaptà had been very full the whole of the spring ; on the ninth and tenth it was unusually so. On the eleventh it was suddenly dried up, and its bed filled with a torrent of boiling lava, that overflowed the banks, and bore destruction along with it. The farms that it passed were overwhelmed, and rendered for ever incapable of cultivation. In this way it continued till the eighteenth, fresh streams rolling over the old, melting it in its passage, and forming one solid mass. A thick steam marked its course towards Kirkubai.

On level ground the stream of lava was from twenty to thirty feet high. To escape its fury the peasants fled with their cattle to the Afrettur; but safety was not to be found even here. The sheep, which had always been observed in Iceland to turn to the wind, were now unable to face its sulphureous steam, and many rushed madly into the liquid lava and were destroyed.

Before this time the inhabitants of Skaptafells Syssel had been accustomed to use a sort of wild oats found in the plains, of which tolerable bread was made. Three roots also were plentiful in the Afrettur; hvannaròt (root of the *Angelica arch-angelica*), halltaròt (root of the *Cucubalus acaulis*), and gelldingaròt (root of *Statice armeria*). These were of great service to them in hard years, when they formed a palatable meal with butter. Fialla gröss (*Lichen Islandicus*) also was a favourite dish; but all these were destroyed by the eruption,

which thus forced them to depend still more on foreign produce.

Thirty-three farms were damaged or destroyed. Where the lava did not flow, the grass was poisoned by the black matter that fell on it; even the rain was impregnated with brimstone and ashes.

The other phenomena that accompanied this convulsion of nature were equally terrible. Snow fell on the eleventh and twenty-first of June; and hail of the size of sparrows' eggs. For a long time the sun was obscured, and only occasionally appeared like a ball of fire. The land was not visible to mariners before they were close to the coast; in the mountains it was impossible to see a mile off. In this state of darkness the whole land remained till the month of September, when a strong north wind gradually cleared the atmosphere.

The winter that followed was not calculated to repair the damages of so disastrous a summer.

The severity of the cold was excessive : often twenty degrees (Reaumur) ; at Skalholt it was on one occasion, twenty-one. Without provender for their cattle, with their houses destroyed, this addition to their misfortunes well-nigh overwhelmed them. But they were reserved for still greater ills. The grass that grew on the ashes produced a complaint among the cattle, that carried off in sixteen out of the nineteen Syssels, 19,488 horses, 6800 horned cattle, and 129,947 sheep ; leaving them 1908 of the first, 3064 of the second, and 14,400 of the last. Already in many places they had been obliged to kill during the winter of 1783 a third, and in some places, half of their herds and flocks ; and even then the sheep produced only from one to four pounds of tallow each. Vegetation, in some farms near Langanœs, was entirely stopped ; provender not even for a single cow could be produced.

The lakes turned blue, and sometimes yellow ;

and their sides were strewed with fish, killed by the ashes and brimstone that had fallen into them. The swans, also, that come yearly, were driven away or killed by the smoke; and the few eggs found in the hills were uneatable. The plague now transferred itself from the cattle to the inhabitants; a cramp, accompanied by swellings of the throat and limbs, and other more deadly symptoms, seized on those who lived in the neighbourhood of the eruption, and raged during the winter and spring that succeeded it. Many died of hunger and want of assistance in their illness: in the farm of Nupstad all the inhabitants died, and their corpses were found by chance by some travellers who passed that way.

It has been calculated that the loss of life, consequent on the eruption and the plague and famine that followed, amounted to above 9000, and by the destruction of their farms and cattle many of the survivors were reduced to utter destitution, and wandered about, beg-

ging help from the people on the coast. The latter did what little they could to better their condition, but they were themselves poor, and a plan was formed for colonizing the heaths of Jutland with these unhappy peasantry. The idea was afterwards abandoned, and by a succession of good seasons, the population of the island has increased to beyond what it was at the beginning of the 18th century.

CHAPTER XIV.

Vidoe — The eider-ducks — The Icelandic printing-press—Icelandic poetry—A magazine—The Runic characters—Codex Argenteus.

DURING our absence in the interior, the French corvette had left Reikiavik, and sailed to Dyre Fiord, in Westerland. The priest, Jon Sivertson, from whom the captain expected to derive some intelligence concerning the Lilloise, was unable to throw any more light on the subject, and after the inquiries had been repeated, to no purpose, along the north-west coast of the

island, the Recherche directed her course towards Old Greenland. Before they had proceeded far they were checked by the ice, which presented an insurmountable bar to any communication with the land. They were not even able to penetrate far enough to see the coast; the weather continued as unfavourable as possible to the expedition, and at the end of August they returned to Reikiavik, with the object of the mission no further advanced than when they left it.

The coldness of the season had delayed the arrival of the eider-ducks beyond the usual time for their breeding. About the beginning of June a few made their appearance, and within a fortnight afterwards the bay of Reikiavik swarmed with them, whenever the weather was calm. The principal spots in Faxefjord, on which they breed, are Vidoe and Engoe, two pleasant islands in sight of Reikiavik, a third, and smaller one, called Ephersoe, would also be tenanted by these birds, were it not, at

low water, accessible to foxes and dogs by a reef, which is dry at spring-tides, and forms the principle protection of the harbour.

Vidoe is interesting as being the place from which all the literature of the country is disseminated, for it contains the only printing-press now existing in Iceland. The art was first introduced, at the time of the Reformation, by Jon Arceson, bishop of Holum, one of its most strenuous opposers, who hoped, by the aid of typography, to check the change of opinion which was gaining ground. He accordingly brought over a Swede, who superintended the establishment of a press in Nordland, which helped to overthrow its founder and the supremacy of his religion in that quarter, for among the first books that were issued from it was an Icelandic version of the Bible, by Gulbrandr Thorlakson, in use to this day. It must have been sufficient for the literary wants of the country, for, till the middle of the last century, no attempt at a rival establishment was made;

and when at length a second press was set up, in Hrappsey, an island in Breidefiord, a very inconsiderable number of books appeared from it, and a society, called "Islanska Bokmenta Felags," or the Icelandic Book Society, purchased both, and united them at Leira, in Borgafiord. Subsequently, Magnus Stephenson, the principal promoter of the society, on his removal to Vidoe, transferred the press to the latter place, where it now remains, rented from the Bokmenta Felags by his son.

As, besides seeing the eider-ducks, the Frenchmen had a wish to purchase some books printed in the country, we made a party to visit the proprietor of the island. The road to the spot where the crossing is the shortest is very rough, and we willingly availed ourselves of the offer of a boat belonging to one of the ships in the harbour. We landed at some steep stone steps, which were separated from the house by a lawn, planted with about fifty trees. Though very young, they are already more than twelve

feet high, and will, probably, thrive better than most others, being protected from the wind by the house at the back and a hill on each side. The house is about the size of the governor's, and is flanked on one side by a small chapel. Its dilapidated state, however, and the half-rotten window-frames, in which broken panes of glass have been replaced by wooden panels, present a marked difference between the two; and the appearance of the exterior is not further improved by a wooden porch intended to screen the entrance from the wind, which, I suspect, requires some more substantial bulwark than the rickety kind of sentry-box that is opposed to its violence. The principal apartment is both large and lofty, and, when we entered it, was filled with tables loaded with books in sheets. The uniformity of the whitewashed walls was broken by different patches of damp, as well as by a few prints of the Danish royal family, and some likenesses of such of the Stephenson family as had been in Copenhagen.

Among them I remarked the portrait of Magnus Stephenson, the father of the present proprietor of Vidoe, who, during this century and the end of the last, made a considerable figure in his country. His father was Stifamtmand, and he himself filled the post of Justitiarius, of which one of his brothers was secretary, another being Amtmand of Westerland. The glory of the Stephensons, however, has not been able to reach the third generation, and several of the grandsons of the governor have fallen back into the class of boors.

Magnus himself, without doubt, was a very superior man, and exerted himself in every way that he thought would be conducive to the good of his country. Not satisfied with putting within the reach of his fellow-citizens foreign works of merit and utility, and also adding considerable original matter to the stock of Icelandic literature, he laboured incessantly to ameliorate their physical condition by the introduction of superior breeds of cattle, and im-

provements in their limited husbandry. It is at no time easy to overthrow customs sanctioned by length of time, and it is, therefore, not astonishing that the Icelanders, who are most particularly prejudiced in favour of the habits of their forefathers, neglected to second with zeal the exertions of this well-wisher of his country.

The whole of the hill to the west of the house was strewn with nests of ducks. So much do these interesting birds feel their security in Vidoe, that five of them had chosen as their location, the ground under a narrow bench that runs along the windows of the house: and so perfectly fearless were they, that, without moving away, they would peck at the hand that disturbed them. The rising ground is particularly favourable for the birds to build on, being covered with hollows and inequalities, that serve to protect them from the weather, and only require the addition of down to convert them into nests. The drakes are easily known by their white and black plumage; but the dark

hue of the females makes it difficult to distinguish them from the holes in which they sit. Owing to their lying close, I have frequently trodden on them, without their warning me of their presence till the mischief was done. The drakes, though by no means wild, will not allow themselves to be handled so freely as the ducks, and mostly keep together on the top of the hill.

As soon as a nest is completed, it is usual to remove the greater part of the down, while the bird is away feeding; and this operation is repeated a second, and occasionally a third, time. On her return, the bird makes up the deficiency thus created, by stripping her own breast; and, when her stock is exhausted, she calls on her mate to add his portion, which will bear no comparison with the sacrifice she has made. The same sort of spoliation is practised with regard to the eggs, care being taken that three or four are left; for should the bird on her return find the nest empty, she will desert it, and not breed again the same season. About six, con-

siderably larger than those of tame ducks, and of a light green colour, are found in each nest. Their flavour is very inferior to that of hens' eggs, but they are not so strong as to prevent their being made into omelettes.

The average quantity of down obtained from three nests is half a pound, so mixed with grass and foreign matter, that forty pounds in that state are reduced to fifteen, after it has been thoroughly cleaned. Vidoe and Engoe together produce, I believe, about three hundred pounds weight yearly, which would, if the above calculation is correct, make the number of ducks that come to these two places fall not far short of ten thousand every year. The number, however, that breed in Faxèfiord is small, compared to those that bend their course to Breidèfiord. The innumerable little islands that fill that bay afford ample shelter and security to eider-ducks, who seem to avoid nothing so much as any place accessible to foxes. These cunning animals are particularly fond of their eggs; but,

though we will give them all credit for ingenuity in getting at them, we can hardly be expected to put much faith in the story told about them by the Danish travellers Olavson and Paulson. When, say they, the Icelandic foxes have detected any crows' eggs in an inaccessible place, they take one another's tails in their mouths, and form a string of sufficient length to reach the nest, and let one end of it over the rock. They have, however, forgotten to tell us how the eggs are passed up by these craftiest of Reynards.

The separation of the down from the grosser feathers and straws, occupies the women during winter. It is then thoroughly divested of particles too minute for the hand to remove, by being heated in pans and winnowed like wheat. Should it become matted and dead, it is again subjected to a brisk heat, which restores its original elasticity and increases its bulk. As in the case of ostriches, the down taken after death, is inferior to that which the living duck

tears from its breast, which prevents their destruction through wantonness. They are besides protected by the law, which punishes the shooting of them by a pecuniary penalty, and the forfeiture of the weapon used. Nor are guns allowed to be fired in the neighbourhood during their sojourn; and even the corvette that brought the prince, abstained in the spring from saluting him.

The chapel was, when we saw it, used as a carpenter's workshop, and numerous lines were also stretched across the upper part of it, hung with sheets fresh from the press. It is superior to the common country churches, and is kept in good repair. Behind it is a small family burying-ground, in which I observed the first grave-stones I had seen in the country.

A mere earthen hut contains the two printing-presses, which are of a very ordinary description, and were at this time unused, for want of a supply of paper. A monthly magazine of the size of the *Mirror* was started, under the super-

intendence of the Stift Profastur, but its publication was several times suspended, on account of this deficiency of materials. Its contents embrace a few of the principal events in the rest of Europe, and the remainder is filled up with topics of interest in the island. The name of Sunnar Postinn, or Southern Post, was given to it in imitation of another periodical of the same nature, which the late Magnus Stephenson conducted for several years, under the title of "Klaustri Postin," or the Post of the Cloister, because published at Vidoe, which was formerly a monastery.

It has been remarked, that there must be much leisure in any country, before there can be much literature, and that where a few good books have been handed down to us, a great many bad ones must have been written. Upon this principle, it is difficult to conceive how a country like Iceland could have found time for literature. It would be supposed, that all its genius would have been expended in supplying

the common wants of life; but upon this frozen soil poets sang, and historians recorded for future ages. Manuscripts are in such plenty, that Sir Joseph Banks, on his return, presented the British Museum with more than three hundred, and a vast number have been published at Copenhagen, by the Society of Antiquities of the North. Many of the latter are valuable, as giving a minute account of the manners of the people, and promoting civilization, by making the powers of the mind an object of veneration to men, whose situation might incline them to respect those only of the body.

But though the prose works of the Icelanders are voluminous, it is to the poetry of their Scalds that this country is chiefly indebted. The character of their poems is adapted to the gloomy climate in which they lived, and when mythological, they are extremely obscure, on account of the metaphors in which they abound. When they descend to the deeds of simple mortals, and become more intelligible, the cleaving of

skulls and bucklers, and the feeding the "yellow-footed bird" with the carcasses of their enemies, are the subjects upon which their bards love to expatiate ; and the joys of drinking ale in Vall-halla, in the company of Odin and his heroes, call forth their highest praises.

Occasionally they indulge in softer strains, and the love of some hero for a gold-ringed maid is the theme of their song ; but, even while handling this subject, the poet cannot divest his verse of ferocity, and the acquisition of the lady involves the destruction of her family. Nor is she herself always safe. Skirner, when sent by his master Niordur to woo for him,* Girda, finding the offer of eleven apples and a gold ring endowed with magic powers unavailing, threatens to slay both her and her father, and at last gains his suit by producing a wand which enables him to consign her to endless misery, if she rejects his solicitations.

* "Journey of Skirner." Edda 3.

The love of poetry has not been extinguished by the numerous calamities that have overwhelmed the Icelanders at different times for the last eight centuries, and at this moment many men might be found who would not disgrace the ancient Scalds. Some in later years have, besides writing original poems, undertaken the translation of works in other languages. The principal book at present in the course of publication at Vidoe, is a prose translation of Homer's *Odyssey*, by Sveinbiorn Egylson, one of the Professors of Bessestad; and I have been told by persons fully competent to judge of its merits, that the part already completed is very well done. But among translations, the metrical version of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, by Jon Thørlakson, is allowed to be pre-eminent. This man was a priest in Osterland; and when I have said that he was looked upon as a poor priest by his countrymen, some idea of his penury may be formed. His benefice did not bring him in more than forty shil-

lings a year, and I am afraid he did not derive much from other sources. In the midst of this distress, however, he not only wrote several original pieces, but studied the English language, to qualify himself for the task he had undertaken. Besides the *Paradise Lost*, he translated Pope's *Essay on Man*, and his poverty and genius having been made known to a society in London, 20*l.* were subscribed and sent to him. But the help came too late, and before the sum had arrived, which might have procured him some comforts in his old age, the poet had sunk into the grave.

The metre adopted by Jon Thorlakson in his translation, is the old verse used in the *Edda* of *Soemundr*, the peculiarity of which consists in the rhyme being at the beginning of the line, and its depending on the repetition of a particular letter in each couplet. This mode of having a prevailing sound, as well as the general structure of the verse, is better explained by an extract from the *Fœringa Saga*, or tale of the

Feroe isles, which, though not strictly regular in all its parts, will give some notion of the Icelandic metre. It is the Creed of Thràndr, a Feroese, newly converted to Christianity, who, in answer to the inquiries of a woman into his belief, repeats the following words :

Gangat ek einn ut
 Fjorir mèr fyglia
 Fimm Guds òinglar
 Ber ek bœn fyrer mèr
 Bœn fyrer Kristi
 Syng ek sálma sjö
 Sjál Gud hluta min.

["I go not out alone, four follow me, five angels of God ; I offer a prayer for myself, a prayer for Christ ; I sing seven psalms, God preserve my soul !"]

The above lines will show that there exists a trifling similitude between the English and Icelandic languages. The latter was in general use in Scandinavia before the tenth century, and was introduced into Iceland by the first settlers. Gradually the ancient language divided itself into several dialects. On the continent it under-

went great changes, and was the root of the modern Swedish and Danish; the former still retains considerable likeness to the modern Icelandic. In the Feroe Isles, the old Gothic took another form, and laid the foundation of a distinct language, spoken in that place to this day. In Iceland alone it has been retained pure, and, with the exception of a trifling departure from its ancient forms, it has remained essentially the same tongue, mainly owing to the little communication that the natives have with strangers. Their old Sagas supply them amply with amusement and instruction, and serve to keep alive the language which was spoken by Ingolf. Not that in modern times the isle has been deficient in authors, though, from the political state of the country, they have been obliged to forego the two principal departments in which their ancestors excelled, namely, history and war-songs.

There is a peculiarity in the Icelandic tongue, which it has in common with ours. It is the

retention of the sound "th," sounded, perhaps, sharper than in English. They have still kept the old form of the aspirated *t*, which is written the same as in the Anglo-Saxon alphabet. Before the introduction of Christianity the Runic characters were in use instead of the Gothic. There has been much dispute about the meaning and derivation of the word Runic, which appears to signify simply letters.

At present, both in writing and printing, the Gothic character is made use of in general, few books in the Icelandic appearing in the Latin style, except the splendid Magnæan edition of the Sagas, published at Copenhagen.

In the library of Upsala there is a manuscript, which may be looked upon as one of the greatest curiosities in that university. It is known by the name of "Codex Argenteus," which it derives from the silver letters in which the body of it is written. The initials of chapters, and some few passages, are distinguished from the rest by being in gold. It contains the four

Gospels in the Mæso-Gothic language, and is supposed to be a copy of the translation made by Ulphilas, the Apostle of the Goths, in the fourth century. By some it has been doubted whether it can lay claim to so great antiquity, but none have attributed it to a later date than the middle of the sixth century.

The history of so venerable a volume, which contains the only remaining specimen of the root of the modern northern languages, must be interesting. It is strange that it should have remained unnoticed for near twelve hundred years; such, however, was the case. It was first discovered in a Benedictine convent in Westphalia, about 1597, and was removed to Prague, where it remained till the storming of of the town by the Swedes in 1648. By the fortune of war, it fell into the hands of Count Köningsmark, who presented it to the Queen of Sweden, as a tribute to her learning. Christina, about the same time, invited Isaac Vossius, of Leyde, to her court, and purchased from him

his father's library. She also gave him a handsome appointment, and employed him to collect books and manuscripts for her throughout Europe. The place of librarian of Upsala becoming vacant, it was conferred on him, but, at the abdication of the queen, he left the north and returned to Holland.

It was at this time that the charge of plundering Christina's library was brought against him. Whether, according to his own account, he made a selection for himself with the queen's leave, or, as was generally supposed, he carried them off surreptitiously, is not clear; but it is certain that many valuable books disappeared with him, and among others the "*Codex Argenteus*." Fortunately it was returned by Count Magnus Gabriel de la Gardie, a Swedish nobleman, who purchased the manuscript from the executors of Vossius for two hundred and fifty pounds sterling, and presented it to the university of Upsala.

The volume is a quarto, with violet coloured leaves, in fair preservation. The beginning of

St. Matthew, and St. John, and some other parts are lost. The characters are a mixture of Greek, Roman, and Runic, and the whole is written in capitals. As it is the oldest form of Gothic known, and the Icelandic the oldest form in use, the two following copies of the Lord's prayer, the first from the Codex, and the second from a modern Icelandic Bible, will show the connexion between the two.

“Atta unsar thu in Himinam ; weihnai namo thein ; quimai thindinassns theins ; wairthai vilja theins sue in Himina, jah ana airthai ; hlaiif unsarna thana sinteinan gif uns himnidaga ; jah aflet uns thatei skulans sigaima sua sue jah weis afletam thaim skulam unsaraim ; jah ne briggais uns in fraistubnjai, ak lausei uns af thamma unbillim ; unte theina is thindangardi, jah mahts, jah walthus in Aiwins. Amen.”

“Fader vor, thu sem ert à Himnum, helgest thitt nafn ; tilkome thitt rike ; verde thinn vile svo à jördu sem à himne ; gef thu oss i dag vort daglegt braud. Og firergef oss vorar skulder,

svo sem ver fyrergifum vorum skulldunautum og
innleid oss eigi i freistne, helldur frelsa thu oss
frà illu; thuiad thitt er riked og måttur og dyrd
om allder allda. Amen."

CHAPTER XV.

Kieblivik—Poverty of the clergy—Education at Bessestad — Provision for Icelandic students at Copenhagen —Trade with Iceland—Mortality of infants in Westman Isles.

A VISIT that I made to Kieblivik, shortly before leaving Iceland, gave me an opportunity of traversing the whole length of the lava, that covers the south-western extremity of the island, called Gulbringe Sysseil. The Hraun that surrounds Havnifjord, though it had at first sight appeared most terrific, had gradually lost its horrors, yet

these were not sufficient to prepare me for the state of the country beyond that place. With the exception of one spot on the road, we met with no sign whatever of vegetation; and I do not recollect ever having seen so intricate and baffling a pathway as that formed between the clumps of blistered lava. On the left hand, the sulphur mountains of Krusivik bounded the sight; while on the right, Snœfell Jokul reared its white top at the distance of forty-eight miles.

Kieblivik offers nothing more than an open roadstead to shipping, and that so exposed, that while vessels are discharging or taking in cargoes, the work is continued without intermission both night and day. The sole inducement to make this a trading place was the goodness of the fishery, and the bartering of cod for necessities by the people who come down for the season.

As the fishing was over, the place was almost deserted; the permanent population consisting of the factors of the principal merchants, their

families, and a few dependents. The ground at the back of the village is covered with stones, and in its natural state unfit to produce even a weed. Two of the merchants, however, have been at the trouble of making about twenty acres into meadow land by transporting on the backs of horses, the soil required, which had to be collected for some miles round the neighbourhood. The expense, it may be supposed, was not trifling, and I fear far surpassed the advantage as yet derived. The fact is, that if cost were disregarded, the vegetable products of Iceland might be considerably increased, but as the object is not merely to produce, but to produce with economy, till its nature undergoes some great revolution, the efforts of its inhabitants will avail but little in improving its surface.

Among other persons at Kieblivik, I met the newly-appointed Pastor of Grundevik. This young man had lately returned from the university of Copenhagen, where he had distinguished himself by his talents, and acquired a reputation

for great abilities. It will hardly be credited that his industry for many years, and his perseverance through difficulties, was rewarded by a benefice worth fifty shillings per annum, at its highest valuation. Nor was he the most unfortunate of his class, for many have not even the choice of such a preferment as Grundevik for a dozen years after they have qualified themselves for the church, which they cannot enter before they are appointed to some parish.

In consequence of this delay, many students who have concluded their studies at Bessestad, are obliged to seek lay employment till they are appointed to benefices. Being in the predicament of the unjust steward, they prefer entering into the service of the traders to returning to field labour, and many engage themselves for clerks during the busy part of summer, when an extra number of hands is required; a few obtain permanent situations as factors. It may be easily imagined, that a counter-jumper is not the best person to select

for a clergyman, and of this many are sensible, but the wants of most, who cannot remain at home, force them to this mode of earning a livelihood.

The lot of those whose better circumstances at home enable them to finish their education in Denmark is not much easier. The allowance derived from their parents is rarely sufficient to support them in Copenhagen without some addition from other sources. A part of the university, called Regencen, is reserved for the Icelandic students, a limited number of whom are allowed a room between two, and a weekly allowance of a silver rixdollar and some firing. Here the poor youths continue to labour with unwearied perseverance ; and when, after a period protracted by a portion of their time being given up to the instruction of others, they leave the university, their names are seldom omitted in the list of classical honours.

On my return from Kieblivik, I found that the "Handelstid," or trading time, was approach-

ing at Reikiavik, and that the bustle consequent on it was changing the face of the town. Peasants, leading twenty, and sometimes thirty, horses in a string, were every five minutes making their appearance, with their last year's produce of wool, tallow, and fish. On arriving at an open space in the middle of the town, called Ostervall, they pitch their tents, unload their horses, and remove them to plains outside. Their progress to the coast is orderly and well regulated; but their return, particularly the first day's journey, is not always conducted with the same steadiness, owing partly to the corn brandy that they bring back with them. Their disputes are rarely followed by any serious consequences, wrestling being the mode adopted for settling their differences. The variety also of bulky articles which they have to transport home gives them much trouble. Planks, in particular, with their ends trailing on the ground, are a source of continual annoyance, frightening the horses, who are unused to the

.

noise, and in their struggles upset those fastened to them, staving the casks against the rocks on the side of the path, and strewing their load about the plain. At night they are hobbled and left to shift for themselves, there being no danger of their straying far away.

From the middle of the seventeenth century to 1776, the Icelandic trade was monopolized by a company of Hamburg merchants settled at Bergen. At the end of that time the King of Norway determined to carry it on himself, and established factories in each port. The speculation, however, turned out to be more profitable to the agents than to the principal, who, after suffering an annual loss of twelve thousand pounds, retired at the end of ten years, and opened the trade to all his subjects. Any commerce with foreigners was strictly interdicted, and no ships, except Norwegians with timber, are to this day allowed to enter any Icelandic port, and even Norwegian vessels are obliged to

have a special permission from Copenhagen. During the war the government found it difficult to enforce these regulations, and divers British subjects carried on a trade with the country, at first by force, and afterwards by an agreement wrung from the governor. The peace put an end to this open commerce, but it has been found impossible to check as general a contraband trade carried on by the natives with the crews of French and Dutch fishing-vessels. There are one-and-twenty ports, besides one in the Westman isles, most of which have only one or two merchants in them.

Reikiavik had, while I was there, sixteen or seventeen permanent establishments in it, and was besides yearly visited by about five and twenty galliots and sloops, which sailed from port to port, and were not allowed, by the conditions imposed on the trade by Christian VII., to remain more than a month at a time in the same harbour. The ports are principally on the western coast, those on the northern being

particularly dangerous in summer on account of the drift-ice from Greenland. On the southern, which is but little peopled, there is but one solitary port, Oreback, which is so difficult of approach, that ships are delayed weeks together at its entrance.

The principal exports are wool, tallow, and stockfish, the latter from the south and west, and the former, as well as a large quantity of knit goods, from Nordland. These, with blue and white fox-skins, swansdown, feathers, and lichen *Islandicus*, form nearly the whole of their products.

In return, they take rye, tobacco, and corn brandy, a few manufactured goods, such as cloth, hardware, and a trifling quantity of linen. The little flour that comes to the island stops at the ports, but coffee and sugar are scarcely looked upon as luxuries, and are articles of universal consumption. A small quantity of coal for the smithies, and several cargoes of salt for the fisheries, are annually sent for to Liverpool,

and, with these few helps from abroad, they manage to subsist, every article almost that they possess being of home manufacture.

The circulating medium is entirely of silver, and though the legal currency is properly the same as that of Denmark, another, which gives an increased value of fifty per cent. to the coins, has been adopted of late years between individuals. No bank-notes are in circulation, nor are gold and copper ever met with. The coins in use are the specie dollar, which is worth four shillings and sixpence, and smaller pieces, which represent its parts, from $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{1}{12}$, besides several of antique date, that bear no relation to it.

By the end of August, the produce of the year had been collected, and the shipping prepared to leave the island for Europe. The majority were bound for Copenhagen and the small Danish islands, and the remainder were to sail direct with stockfish to Spain. The war in the latter country had rendered the markets uncer-

tain in the northern provinces, and I doubt whether more than one vessel went that year into Bilboa. The French *savans* had made large collections of minerals and animals in Westerland, and besides divers casks filled with preparations, took with them some live specimens of horses, eagles, hawks, and foxes. The carnivorous part of the collection was easily provided for by slaughtering some of their horses, but considerable difficulty had to be overcome in procuring forage for two live horses, as the grass was not yet made into hay, and the little that was cut lay rotting in the rain.

The zoology of Iceland presents nothing marked either in the number or appearance of its quadrupeds. The domestic part is confined to the horse, cow, sheep, dog, and cat. The goat is occasionally met with in Nordland, and the pig, though individuals have been once or twice imported, is too expensive to rear in a country, where neither grain nor vegetables are easily raised.

The hardihood and sagacity of the horses cannot be too much admired. The first quality will scarcely be denied them by any one who has seen them lie out the whole winter, with no other shelter than that of their coats, which are longer than bears', and obliged to sustain life by picking up sea-weed on the shore. When hard pressed by hunger, many will devour fish, and thrive on it. In travelling over the plains that abound in quagmires, too much reliance cannot be placed in the sagacity of these beasts whose instinct will carry them safe through the greatest difficulties. On coming to a doubtful place, both their scent and feeling will be put in requisition ; and, should they refuse to advance, not even the severest application of the whip will suffice to urge them on. On one or two occasions I have seen an obstinate rider overcome the reluctance of his horse to proceed, and an immersion up to the neck in mud was the invariable consequence.

The cows are rarely to be found with horns ;

but nature has been more bountiful to the sheep in this respect, and wethers with four, and sometimes six, of these appendages, are not uncommon. Their wool is coarse, and approaching to the nature of hair; and it is the custom of the shepherds to tear it off the animals, instead of shearing them. The only reason assigned for this practice is the severity of the climate, which would not admit of the sheep being at once stripped entirely of their winter clothing.

Shakspeare has marked the distinguishing feature of the "prick-eared cur of Iceland," which, in other respects, resembles the dog used for draught by the Esquimaux. He is perhaps smaller, and is put to no use but that of keeping the sheep, and driving cattle off the toon or meadow.

If the number of their domestic animals is limited, that of the wild ones is still more so. Reindeer and foxes may be said to include the whole denomination; for though a few white bears are found every winter in Nordland, they

are visitors and not natives, coming on the ice from Greenland, and happy to find their way back to it, if they are fortunate enough to escape the bullets with which the peasants are sure to welcome their landing. The foxes are blue and white; the former variety being in reality of a very deep iron-gray colour.

The Frenchmen are fortunate enough to procure a specimen of the hawks of this country, which were so famous when falconry was in vogue. Of the two varieties of gray and white the latter was the most valued for its beauty and docility; and so much prized were they in Europe, that till late years, the King of Denmark kept a mews in Reikiavik, for the reception of these birds, which were yearly sent for, when their education was completed, in a ship expressly fitted up for their conveyance. The house appropriated to them still exists on the beach; but it has degenerated into a common store.

Two things must be noticed, in reference

to the animal part of the creation of this country. The first is, that in common with Ireland, it has the privilege of being free from toads, serpents, and all venomous creatures, which would argue that St. Patrick at some time paid it a visit. The other is, the strange effect produced by the natives living, in some districts, on sea-fowl. In the Westman Isles, the use of them is universal, not only as food but fuel. After being plucked, they are dried and heaped up in stacks, and serve for firing during winter. The effluvia arising from them while burning, is of course pestilential; but it is of no consideration with the Icelanders. This, however, is nothing to the consequence attributed to the eating them; every child born there is attacked, soon after its birth, by a disease that ends in lock-jaw, and never allows it to survive the seventh day. One only child, that has been kept in the Westman Isles, has escaped, but as it was of Danish parents, whose diet differs from that of the natives, this exception does not of course, affect the universal rule.

CHAPTER XVI.

Population—National character—Weddings—Funerals—
Departure from Iceland—Eld Eyar—Feroe Isles.

THE Icelanders are not generally considered very long lived ; the hardships that the majority undergo in the sea fishery, must naturally wear out their frames, and many suffer at an early age from rheumatism. In 1801 the population amounted to 47,209,* of whom 25,700 were females. Of this number forty-one were above ninety years of age. At present the island contains about 53,000 souls. I have heard the natives say that there exists a prophecy to the effect that the population will never reach

60,000; it has, however, been stated, that in the old times, before the plague called Suartr Daudi visited them, it amounted to a hundred thousand.

The disposition of the Icelanders is serious, and by many has been considered even morose. Travellers who have made it their business to inquire more particularly into their religious feelings, have reported very favourably of them in that respect, and even the casual observer must be struck with the great attention they pay to devotional exercises.

Except in the trading places and fishing stations on the coast, where they have often much idle time on their hands from the badness of the weather preventing them from putting to sea, in a moral point of view their character is generally unexceptionable. The cases of dishonesty which came to my knowledge were neither many nor very serious. Sometimes a keg of tallow is found to contain a stone which will add a pound or two to its weight,

but this species of fraud is not of frequent occurrence. As for crimes of deeper dye, such as robbery accompanied with violence, or murder, they are very rare ; and in this respect the modern Icelanders are widely different from their ancestors, who, it has been shown in the foregoing pages, were turbulent and blood-thirsty as late as the sixteenth century.

Four years previous to my visiting the country, a peasant in Nordland was murdered by a man and woman, who afterwards set fire to his house with a view of concealing their crime. I did not hear the exact inducement that prompted this act, but there must have been some attenuating circumstances attending it, as all the sympathy was in favour of the murderers, and the victim was spoken of with hatred. The case was clearly brought home to them, yet the transmission of the evidence from Nordland to Reikiavik, and thence to Denmark, occupied so much time, that two years and a half had elapsed before the warrant of the king arrived

for their decapitation. Even then it was expected that their execution would be delayed, as neither executioner nor proper instrument of death was to be found in the island, and it would be necessary to remove them to Norway. When the time came, this additional delay was rendered unnecessary, by the offer of the brother of the murdered man to take on him the office of headsman. However strange it may appear, the proposal was accepted, though savouring strongly of revenge, and the execution took place.

Suicides, and all who have forfeited their lives to the law are excluded from consecrated ground. Their bodies are merely covered with a heap of stones in the form of a barrow; some such have been pointed out to me, nor is there any probability of their disappearing with time, as it is customary for every one who passes by to add a stone to the heap.

The Icelandic weddings and funerals remain to be noticed, though they are marked by little to distinguish them from the same ceremonies

in other Protestant countries. When a marriage is to take place, the party proceeds to church in regular order, the bridegroom leading the men, and the bride following them, accompanied by the women. When arrived at the place of worship, the male part of the friends take their seats, with the bridegroom, on the left, and the female, with the bride, remain on the right side of the church. After a hymn has been sung, they are each presented to the priest by a sponsor. The usual questions are asked, and, after an address and a few more psalms, the new-married people are dismissed, and walk home side by side, the rest of the party following in the same order as before the ceremony. The feasting is kept up for two or three days, and attended with much conviviality. An old custom still remains in force, by which the bridesmaids refuse the husband access to his wife's room till he promises to give her a present on the following morning. The settlement of this agreement often takes up several hours,

during which the women are inexorable and keep the man out.

The funerals are conducted with much solemnity, and little of that carousing that is met with on the same occasions in other northern countries. A funeral oration is read over the body, by the priest, who calls the attention of those present to the most remarkable traits in the life of the deceased, and concludes his address with a suitable exhortation. These orations are not omitted even at the funerals of infants, and the ingenuity of the clergyman must often be severely taxed to find any thing worthy of notice even in those who have died at a mature age. The procession then follows the corpse to the churchyard, and, after it has been lowered into the grave, the priest throws in a spadeful of earth. While the penitential psalms are being sung the rest of the company follow his example, one or two jumping into the grave, and stamping down the earth. As soon as it is filled the ceremony is concluded, and each man returns home.

The time having now arrived for my departure I engaged a passage in a small cutter of eighty tons burden, bound for Altona, and took leave of my friends at Reikiavik. My stay had lasted rather more than a twelvemonth, and though I had often met with annoyances, of many and various kinds, I had repeated opportunities of marking the estimable qualities of the Icelanders' character—calm, orderly, and persevering. I had found them a people capable of great labour of mind and body, and though not abounding in men of genius, producing zealous and indefatigable scholars, they present an example of how independent the human intellect is of climate. In Italy we find nature luxuriant and beautiful, and man only dwindling into insignificance: in Iceland we find him rising superior to the difficulties that surround him, and achieving a complete victory over the circumstances in which he is placed.

On the third of September we set sail; the

weather was dark and threatening, yet till we cleared the land it continued tolerably moderate. Soon after we had passed the Eld Eyar, or Fire Islands, off Cape Rakianess, the lateness of the season became apparent, and we met with one continued succession of gales.

These islands are merely barren rocks, generally covered with sea-fowl, that have been thrown up by submarine volcanoes. About a month before the great eruption took place in Skapta Felds Syssel, a volcano burst forth at sea, seventy miles in a south-western direction from Reykianess, and threw up such a quantity of pumice-stone as to impede the navigation. On further examination, a new island was discovered to have risen out of the ocean, consisting of lofty cliffs, within which a fire raged with great violence, and hurled out pumice-stones. It was called Nyoe, or New Island, and taken possession of in the name of the King of Denmark ; but before it had been in existence quite a year, it disap-

peared, and the only trace of this ephemeral land is a sunken rock to the west of the Eld Eyar.

Mount Hekla is generally the last spot seen on bearing away to the south, and about a week after losing sight of it we approached the Feroe Isles, between which and the Orkneys we beat about for a fortnight, baffled by easterly gales, that prevented our entering the North Sea.

It is generally believed that the Norwegians, who first established themselves in these islands, gave them the name of Faroe,* from the number of sheep they found in them. The term Feroe is also perhaps derived from *fier*, feathers, an article which in consequence of the number of sea-fowl caught there is very abundant. The isles are in number twenty-two, seventeen of which are inhabited; they occupy from north to south sixty-seven miles, and extend in breadth forty-five. They are about three hundred and eighty miles distant from Norway, and two hundred from Shetland.

* Description of the Feroe Isles. By G. Landt.

They consist of a group of steep hills, rising from the sea, chiefly of a conical form, and close to each other ; some proceed with an even declivity to the shore, but the greater part have two or three, or more sloping terraces, formed by projecting rocks, and covered with a thin stratum of earth, which produces grass. Close to the sea, however, the land in general consists of perpendicular rocks, from two to three hundred fathoms in height. The loftiest mountain is two thousand two hundred and forty feet high, and from its summit, which is a plain of six hundred feet by two hundred, the whole of the Feroe Isles can be seen in clear weather.

The inhabitants are more superstitious than the Icelanders, whom they resemble in their manners, coming from the same stock ; but as they have no intercourse, many of their customs as well as their languages only show a common origin. The population amounts to about 5000, which gives ten persons to the square mile.

From the badness of weather, and perhaps of the article itself, our bread had become so

mouldy as to be unfit to eat, and we put into Christianstad in Norway, for a fresh supply.

After a delay of two days, we set sail again ; and on the morning of the fortieth day were moored in the Elbe, off Altona.

After the stillness of Iceland, the stir of Hamburg could not but be doubly felt by me. It seemed a new world ; every thing was full of life and animation ; but when I compared the poor and simple people whom I had left with those among whom I found myself, though I doubted whether the Icelandic adage, “*Islander hinn besta lapa sem salen skinnar uppà,*”—(Iceland is the best land the sun shines upon,)—would find any advocate out of it, I came to the conclusion that, as far as real happiness is concerned,

“ An equal portion’s dealt to all mankind.”

END OF VOL. I.

WHITING, BEAUFORT HOUSE, STRAND.





A LAPLANDER OF KOUTOKEINO,
ON SNOW SHOES.

Published by Henry Colburn, Great Marlborough Street, 1840.



A
W I N T E R
IN
I C E L A N D A N D L A P L A N D .

BY
THE HON. ARTHUR DILLON.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:
HENRY COLBURN, PUBLISHER,
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1840.



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A WINTER IN LAPLAND. .

CHAPTER I.

Hamburg—Kiel—Copenhagen.

SOME years ago, while wandering in the north of Europe, I made an attempt to reach Lapland ; but, as my time was limited, and I was afraid of losing the last opportunity of passing over to Iceland that season, unless I made a hasty return to Copenhagen, I was obliged to retrace my steps, after penetrating no further than into Dalecarlia, and to postpone my journey to that quarter till another time.

After remaining a year in Iceland, I went to North America, and, thinking I should now be seasoned for the rigours of a Lapland winter by the two previously spent at Reikiavik and Toronto, I again bent my way towards Sweden, and determined on crossing over to the Icy Sea. For me, the north has always had particular attractions ; the beauty of the winter, the hardihood and simplicity of the inhabitants, those vast forests and lofty mountains which cover the greatest part of it, certainly have charms which cannot be understood by those who have lived in the mild climates of the south. As Frithiof says, when cruising in the Mediterranean,

“ Nordens de fasta, de älskade fjällar
Locka med underlig makt min hag.”

The rapidity with which vegetation advances, and, in a couple of weeks, changes the whole face of the country ; the beauty of the day that lasts for weeks together ; and the brilliancy of the weather during the long winter ; combine

to give Sweden a beautiful, though severe, climate.

Accordingly, in the month of August, I crossed over to Hamburg by a steamer, and soon found myself in that noisy place. Every thing is here matter of fact and vulgar, from the peasant-girls, with their thick legs, and hats like beehives, to the Hebrew countenances that monopolize whole districts of the town. It is generally said, that there are more deformed persons congregated at Lisbon than in any other city; but in one description, that of hunchbacks, probably no place in the world can surpass Hamburg. Every variety of contortion is to be met with here; and there is no probability that the next generation will be less ornamental, as there are certainly enough of the rising one to replace the present beauties whenever they disappear.

The streets are particularly dirty and rough; in fact, like the worst part of the city of London, divested of its pavement and shops. The

amusements are numerous enough, and a tolerable opera is to be found ; but, to a person not immersed in business, Hamburg must be a particularly dull residence. The dirty canals, swarming with filth, and emitting pestiferous odours when the tide is out, cannot but render it unhealthy. In building, the perpendicular elevation is not the only one used ; many houses expand as they rise, and remind one of card houses, with which they probably vie in stability.

The most natural route, with a view to reaching the Baltic from Hamburg, would be the town of Lubeck. As, however, the King of Denmark has a town of his own some miles further off, he has determined to put every obstacle in the way of persons going to Lubeck, and to force them to embark at Kiel. This he is unfortunately enabled, in a great measure, to do, by the Duchy of Lauenberg, which belongs to him, lying between the two free towns. He therefore keeps the road through this part of his possessions in such a detestable state of re-

pair, that twelve hours is scarcely sufficient to perform the distance of six German miles that intervenes. I believe that the king has at last allowed a railroad to be constructed for passengers only, as the transit of goods might materially interfere with the amount of revenue obtained by the Sound dues.

As I had a long journey before me, and no wish to expend all my patience at so early a stage of it, I gave up the idea of going by this execrable road, and preferred the penalty of waiting three days for a steamer in Kiel. Though a university town, there was little to amuse ; and I was heartily glad when the steamer Frederik den Siette appeared in the firth that runs into the Baltic from the town. The passage to Copenhagen is not more than twenty-three hours' duration, even by the very slow boat that has the monopoly granted to it. The first part that is passed in the night is in open sea ; but, with the morning, a beautiful view is displayed, when the boat approaches the channel between the Danish islands. The



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larly those brought from Iceland. The picture-gallery is large, but it is chiefly filled with copies.

Copenhagen is altogether a dull town; its inhabitants are heavy, and its trade has departed. The separation of Norway from the Danish crown has struck a mortal blow at the navy of the country, the former producing its best seamen. The king still keeps up an army of fifty thousand men; but at a great sacrifice of the comforts of the people, who are obliged to serve whether they will or not.

There is a very pretty theatre, but rather small for the only one in a of capital 130,000 inhabitants. The acting is good, and the whole representation got up in very good style.

Having seen the "lions" of Copenhagen, I moved towards my destination; and, committing myself to a post-waggon, arrived at Elsineur and Kronborg Castle. Here a boat was soon procured; and, the wind being fair, in half an hour I landed in Sweden.

CHAPTER II.

Helsingborg—Swedish travelling—Christianstad—
Skane—Blekinge—Roads.

NOTHING can be more striking than the immediate change that presents itself on landing at Helsingborg. What a difference between the clumsy, ill-appointed Danish troops on the opposite shore, and the tall, smart hussars of Prince Oscar, who do duty here! Drilling has not been much resorted to in either case; and, to one accustomed to see British soldiers, there appears to be here but little discipline; yet the

Swede, having naturally a better carriage and a finer figure, the want of it is not so evident in him. Another contrast is not so favourable to Sweden. The horses and oxen are so diminutive, that it would not be difficult to transport a waggon and team in a Danish cart.

The harbour is very small and shallow, suited only for boats, and has been completed but a few years. On a round block of granite, at the termination of the pier, a sentry pointed out to me the words Carl Johan, cut and gilt, in a large running hand. At his last visit to Helsingborg, the king wrote his name here with a piece of chalk, and the people of the town have thus perpetuated his autograph.

A very slight examination of the luggage took place, and we proceeded to a "köellare," or tavern, in the market-place. In this point, I fear that comparison between the opposite shores would be unfavourable to this one, though the inn at Helsingborg is far from the worst that it has been my fortune to enter in Sweden. A

room, strewn with fir-leaves, that give rather an agreeable scent when trodden on, and covered with "taxas," or tables of rates (for every thing in Sweden, down to an innkeeper's bill, is regulated by the burgomaster), was the first that presented itself. A couple of girls ran about under pretence of waiting ; but evidently paid more attention to divers compliments, carelessly thrown at them by some idlers, than to their own business.

The party that had come over in the same boat from Elsineur, were soon provided with horses, and dispersed in different directions. Unless willing to have one's bones shaken to pieces in the peasants' carts, it is necessary to provide oneself here with a vehicle ; as, except where there is water-carriage, Sweden does not afford any more commodious conveyance than that called Skjuts. A diligence has been established between Helsingborg and Stockholm for the last four years ; but, I understand, that not even this solitary coach pays its expenses.

It goes round by Gottenburg, and takes six or seven days to perform its journey; while the same distance can be run over in four. I accordingly applied to my Boniface, who appeared to be the sole broker in such cases in the town, to procure me a carriage of some kind. Like a Jew money-lender, he had nothing of the sort himself; but, after divers inquiries among his friends, he found one that would dispose of a light waggon for a couple of ponies. This round-about way of proceeding arose, no doubt, from a fear of being beaten down in the price, a practice too universally adopted by Englishmen as soon as they leave their country, and frequently enforced little to their credit. The cost of the carriage and harness together, amounted to little more than ten pounds, and even that, I afterwards found, was far more than a Swede would have given for it.

Helsingborg can boast of no other attraction than Ramelies, a watering-place a little way off, which is much visited in summer by the Danes.

The town itself is a mean-looking place, without even the regularity of Elsinour to recommend it. On the rising ground, at the back of the town, which commands the Sound, there are the remains of an ancient fortress. Hoping to have a fair view of Zealand from the top of the tower, I climbed the hill, and found the old tower in so ruinous a state, that every entrance into it was blocked up. The land on the opposite shore presents an almost dead flat, chiefly covered with wood ; but the number of ships always collected in the Sound, give it rather a lively appearance.

The law of Sweden imposes on the peasants, living near the roads, the obligation of providing horses for travellers. In Skane and Smaland, which formerly belonged to Denmark, they are bound to bring their horses to the post-house when summoned ; but in the north, this duty is rendered still more onerous, by their being forced to take their turns in sending a fixed number of horses, regulated by the usual demand on each

road, to the post-house to which they are attached; and they are not allowed to leave the place before twenty-four hours have elapsed, if not hired before that time. It will at once be seen how hard this regulation must press upon the "bonde," or peasant. Not only is he liable to have his cattle and servants taken away without notice, but the remuneration is quite inadequate.

In summer he is often summoned while at work in the fields, and obliged to leave his crops on the ground, and is thereby not unfrequently subjected to much damage. Where a "Hall," or station for horses, exists, the evil is still greater. The law does not entitle the farmer to payment for more than the horses; and as the person who can best be spared on the farm is usually sent to accompany the horses and bring them back, boys are left loitering about the whole day at a tavern, and learn, what is already but too prevalent, drunkenness. The demoralizing effects of this system has often attracted the attention of the Diet, and attempts have been

made to correct it, and remove this burden from the particular class on whom it is imposed; but I have been told that all propositions for a change have been strongly opposed by the chamber of peasants, who consider it better to suffer some inconvenience in summer, than to be deprived of the advantage of letting their horses in winter, when they have little or no work for them at home.

As the horses have often to be sent for at a distance of two miles or more, the delays of changing would make travelling in this part of the country very slow and tedious, were not relays ordered beforehand, by sending a "förbud," or message. For this purpose a number of slips of paper, each inscribed with the name of the "gæstgifvare-gård," or inn, for which it is destined, the number of horses, and the hour at which they will be required, are pinned together in their order, and given to the postmaster. These "förbud sedlar," or bills, will be forwarded from place to place, each gæstgifvare tearing off one,

and sending it to the peasant whose turn it is to come out, and who will be fined if he disregards the summons.

Luggage, which the traveller finds inconvenient to take himself, can with safety be sent on with the bills; but though there is little fear of its suffering from the dishonesty of the driver, the owner must not be astonished if the roughness of the conveyance has made material alteration in the appearance of his portmanteau, and unless very strong, and well protected by covers, shaken it entirely to pieces. Some care must be taken in making out the lists, as the "skjuts bonde," or driver, is not bound to wait more than four hours; and after the second hour, must be paid for the delay.

My host at Helsingborg offered to take this trouble off my hands, and gave me a practical lesson for the future, not to leave to others what can be done by oneself. Through inadvertence he ordered horses at two remote stations for the same hour. I escaped with merely paying for

the time that I had kept the second set waiting, and considered myself fortunate ; for had I arrived very little later, the horses would have been gone, and I should have been delayed several hours at each succeeding place, before reaching Christianstad, which was the end of my first day's journey.

The day was fine, and the road enlivened by groups of peasants repairing to church. The head-dress of the women, called Kluten, is peculiar to Skane, and is worn throughout the province, with some modification. It is properly a white handkerchief, worked at the border, and folded, in a very intricate way, on a round flat shape, that covers the head. In other respects the dress of both men and women varies considerably in different parts of Skane ; the inhabitants differing materially in appearance and customs in each " Harad," or district.

Generally speaking, the Skanians are not much liked by the rest of their countrymen. Their proximity to Denmark, and the length

of time that they formed a part of the Danish nation, are not likely to enslave them to those who have always been Swedes. Their dialect also approaches nearer than any in Sweden to the Danish; and many words of the latter tongue have superseded that of their country. Living chiefly in plains, and on the richest land in Sweden, they are among the most indolent of its inhabitants. They are, however, valiant trenchermen, and, as a native writer remarks about them, one of their most frugal repasts would serve for a feast in Dalecarlia. They are moreover considered suspicious and vindictive, two qualities which cannot be justly laid to the charge of their northern countrymen.

At sunset I passed the gates of Christianstad, the chief town of the lœn of the same name. The town was originally founded by Christian the Fourth of Denmark, and was probably fortified by him as a frontier-town. Since the cession of Skane to Sweden, the place has

naturally fallen into insignificance as a fortress ; and its ramparts are of more service in keeping convicts within them than enemies without. Of these unfortunate individuals above three hundred are kept at Christianstad, which is considered a mild place of punishment. I observed, during my stay, a great number marched about the streets, under the escort of one or two artillerymen with drawn swords ; but I fear that the work they did would not repay their expenses to the country. A few individuals, who had made an attempt at escaping, were distinguished by an iron clog, a foot long, attached to their ankles. It is very rarely that any succeed in freeing themselves before their time of punishment is over. The police regulations in Sweden, though by no means as vexatious as in many other countries, make it difficult for any one to travel through it unknown ; and should the prisoner gain the opposite shore, Denmark will not be a safer asylum to him than his own native woods.

In some of the fortresses for prisoners, especially Marstrand, a short distance north of Gottenburg, the treatment of convicts is represented as particularly severe; and a countryman of mine, who had visited one of them, assured me that nothing could exceed the misery of the wretched persons who were huddled together, and deprived of every thing that could make life desirable, or even endurable.

As the Swedes have no colonies to which they can transport their criminals, the majority of fortified places are crowded with prisoners, and I should think that crime was rather on the increase than otherwise, as those already built are in some cases insufficient to answer the wants of the present time; and proposals have been made to erect a new fortress at Gefle.

The streets are wide and straight; and a fair proportion of the houses are built of stone. The town has had some pretensions to commerce; and a harbour, called Ahus, is attached to it. The communication between these two

points was intended to have been improved by a canal, which was commenced by the founder of the city; but which, amidst the changes of government that have taken place, has been lost sight of, and the whole work has fallen into decay.

At Sölvitsborg, a very indifferent town, I had a partial view of the Baltic. The shore is here rocky, and tolerably high. The small broken rocks that border the whole of the eastern coast from Tornea, disappear a little to the south of this town, and are replaced by low shores that continue to Ystad, the most south-westerly point.

Not far to the eastward from Sölvitsborg, begins the beautiful province of Blekinge; beautiful not only in landscape, but also in its women, who are considered to surpass their countrywomen in personal attractions. The scenery is most varied in every direction; rocks are every where peeping out of the ground, and giving the country an undulating appearance,

that is refreshing after the flats that cover a large portion of Skåne: the habitations are generally very cleanly, and the people more sprightly than their neighbours.

While taking my breakfast at Carlshamn, a young damsel came in, and begged I would carry a parcel for her to Ronneby, a small market-town, a little way on the road to Carlskrona. It is easy to judge by this, that the communication between even neighbouring towns is very slight. The post, I believe, goes about four times a week from one place to the other; but there are no means of sending any thing larger than a letter, except by an express conveyance. Ronneby I found a most lively little market-town, crowded with carts and peasants.

The horses in the south of Sweden are small but handsome, and very spirited. They are always driven in pairs, with double shafts, the pole being jointed about the middle, and divided into pieces. Though the collars are of wood, and totally unfurnished with stuffing, it is

rare to meet with a galled neck, and lameness is as uncommon. I have heard it remarked that the custom of making the horses stand on boards instead of litter, preserves them from many diseases to which those more luxuriously treated are subject.

The inhabitants of Blekinge were, in former times, great pirates, and were looked upon as some of the most terrible marauders that came from the shores of the Baltic. The ferocity which distinguished their race seems to have descended to more modern times, and even in the last century their convivial meetings were so boisterous, that the wives of those who attended them took the precaution of having with them whatever might be required in case a quarrel should arise, and their partners be either wounded or killed. To render their combats the more sanguinary, the contending parties bound themselves together by their belts, and and thus rendered it impossible for either to retreat. The usual conclusion of a fight, car-

ried on in this way was, as may be naturally expected, the death of, at least, one of the adversaries; and as knives were the weapons used in deciding the contest, it is only a wonder that both did not fall in the encounter.

The goodness of the Swedish roads has often been remarked upon by travellers; and to one coming from either Germany or Denmark, the improvement he meets with in this respect must be most agreeable. The advantage, however, is not attended with the same "*amari aliquid*" that it is in England. With the exception of an occasional bridge, where a few farthings are demanded, no toll whatever is imposed on vehicles. Each peasant living near the road has a portion marked out, which it is his duty to keep in repair. Short posts, with letters painted on them, point out to each person the quantity placed under his charge. The ease with which excellent materials for making roads are procured in a country which is composed almost entirely of rock, makes the duty that falls on

each farmer comparatively light; and two or three days in June suffice to cover them with a coat of gravel, which will last till the snow again covers the earth.

The carriage of heavy goods is generally reserved for the winter, as a horse can easily draw twice as much in a sledge as with wheels. The hardness of the winter is, therefore, of incalculable advantage to the Swede. When once the frost has set in, he is no longer subjected to the variations of weather that take place from day to day with us; the sky is as clear as in summer, and the shortness of the day is amply compensated for by the brightness of the nights. The weather may be trying when the cold first commences, but the frame soon accustoms itself to it, and nothing can be more delightful than driving over the smooth snow at a rapid rate, wrapped in a wolf-skin pelisse, and enlivened by the merry jingle of the sleigh bells.

The country between Sölvitsborg and Carlskrona displays but little fertility of soil; the

population depend on fishing, and look less like agricultural labourers than sailors, whose costume they chiefly adopt. The dress of the women is more national; at all times neat, it becomes even rich when a holiday takes place. In those parts that border on Skane, the married women are distinguished from the girls by the same sort of round head-dress as is worn in that province. They alone are allowed to wear rings; in the rest of Sweden both the man and the woman wear them as soon as they are betrothed; in Blekinge, the damsel does not receive one until after the bans have been published for the first time.

Thirty miles from Ronneby the driver pointed out Carlskrona, lying out on an island, and joined to the mainland by a series of bridges that connect two large rocks, and form the only entrance by land. Seen from a distance, the town presents a rather imposing appearance. The ground upon which it is built rises in the centre, and gives a commanding appearance to

a church built upon the highest point, and bearing a strong resemblance to St. Sulpice, at Paris. But the nakedness of the land exhibited itself when I had entered the last gate.

Vast streets, many of them with a natural pavement of granite, and with scarcely a man in them, except the sentries, that were posted at intervals, branched off on every side ; and when I marked the great number of looking-glasses outside the windows, to reflect the passers by into the houses, I could not help thinking that the sight of the human face divine must be a treat in Carlskrona which was not be overlooked.

CHAPTER III.

Carlskrona—Wexio—Mines — Distilleries—Gotha canal
—Norköpping—Inns.

THE Swedish government is very jealous of admitting foreigners into the dockyard of Carlskrona; for what reason is not clear; as in these days it is difficult to confine any invention of consequence to one country, and the attempt to do so only brings ridicule on itself. At Copenhagen it would, no doubt, be considered bad taste in an Englishman to apply for leave to see the dockyard, after the way it was stripped in 1807; but at Carlskrona there is no reason of

the kind. Nor is there any thing in it, from which a foreign nation could derive knowledge, that might afterwards be taken advantage of against Sweden. The principal objects worth seeing are some docks, hewn out in the solid rock, at an enormous expense, by Gustaf III. With its limited population, and still more limited finances, Sweden cannot hope to play a very conspicuous part in a naval war; and would do far better to confine herself to her gun-boats, which will be her surest protection, and can always be manned at a moment's warning, without incurring the cost of supporting a standing navy.

The town is well defended by two castles, built upon granite islets, that form the entrance of the harbour; but nothing can be more wretched than its situation in a commercial point of view. Built upon a barren island, in a remote angle of the coast, and separated from the mainland by many others, it cannot present one inducement to trade. All that it has to

depend upon is the money laid out for the marines, and a dozen line-of-battle ships laid up in ordinary ; and how a population of twelve thousand inhabitants contrive to maintain themselves upon such scanty resources, it is difficult to understand.

In the centre and loftiest part of the town, is the Swedish church ; and not far from it the German one, which resembles the Colosseum in London. The former is not unlike the Sainte Sulpice, at Paris ; but bears externally great marks of dilapidation. Finding the doors open, I entered and saw a clergyman holding forth to a congregation, that amounted only to three or four women, two of whom, if not actually asleep, were verging rapidly to that state. Outside, the scene was a little more lively ; some fifty small carts had arrived, and the bustle of a market-day was usurping the silence that would in an hour or two resume its reign. The streets, far too wide for the number of persons that move in them, are diversified with patches of grass,

and large slabs of granite, that form a natural pavement.

Carlskrona was expected shortly to be enlivened by the presence of the king, who was making a journey round the country, and would stay here about three days. On inquiry, I found he would be lodged at the Freemason's Tavern, at which I was lodging; and as I judged I should have to turn out, I made a hasty retreat, and proceeded on my way to Stockholm.

The province of Smaland, that I now passed through, is the wildest to the south of the capital. The farm-houses are few and mean, and the inhabitants appear generally poor; little corn land was to be seen, the hills were chiefly covered with wood, and for a hundred and twenty miles no town, and little worthy even of the name of a village, cheers the road. Yet Smaland is rich in historical recollections; and one part of it boasts of having produced an army of heroines, who, in the absence of their husbands, defeated the Danes. The recollection of this

exploit is still kept up by a very substantial privilege enjoyed by the women in Værend. In other parts of the country, daughters receive in inheritance only half as much as the sons; in this district they are placed on a par with their brothers, and are further distinguished by a rich costume, which partakes somewhat of a military character on solemn occasions.

A small town, called Wexio, was to be found a little way off the road to Stockholm; last winter it was totally destroyed by one of those conflagrations that have swept away more than one place in Sweden. As most of the towns are built entirely of timber, the progress of the flames is irresistible, and wherever the devouring element has passed, not a vestige of an habitation remains. All the better cities have been thus cleared away, and rebuilt during the last few years. Gottenburg rather gained than lost by the accident: as it was of mere timber when burnt, but is now of brick. In Bergen, in Norway, a mode has been adopted that

checks those universal conflagrations ; every tenth house must be built of stone or brick, and thus some time is given to save, at least, part of a street. Living with the dread of fire before them, the Swedes are very careful in this respect ; all houses and churches in the country are provided with ladders ready placed against the roof, to facilitate the escape of the inmates. In winter, the excessive cold makes it still more difficult to arrest the fire ; for, as the water is always frozen, little help can be obtained that way.

Near the market of Hvetlanda, there is some pretence to a gold-mine at Adelfors, the produce of which is scarcely sufficient to entitle it to the name. Swedes have often shown me watches, and told me the cases were of native gold ; but I have been informed by others, who were equally correct, that the annual amount of that metal, collected from all the mines in the country, does not exceed one or two pounds weight. In Norway. the supply is rather larger,

and some ducats were coined with it by one of the kings of Denmark ; but such doubt was expressed as to its being really Norwegian, that, upon repeating the coinage, a pair of spectacles were ordered to be stamped upon the pieces by the same king, that the incredulous might see and believe.

Sweden is richer in silver-mines, though not to be compared in this respect with Norway. The king owns one in the neighbourhood of Sala, between Falhun and Westeras, which produces more lead than silver. In 1834 I was induced to descend into it, from the recollection of an account that I had read of it, when a boy, in one of Madame de Genlis's works ; but how different did I find the reality from her description ! No misery was apparent in the countenances of the miners ; none were doomed never again to see the light of heaven ; on the contrary, the songs that reverberated through the vaults, bore witness to the lightness of heart that reigned in those regions.

One of the greatest misfortunes of Sweden has been the introduction of corn brandy. Its cheapness, and the natural inclination to too free a use of this stimulant, which is to be found here in as great force as among other northern nations, have done incalculable harm to the country. The greatest portion of the potatoes raised are never intended for food, but are turned into spirits; and when, last year, the failure of the crop threatened a scarcity of brandy, the duties of importation were taken off from foreign potatoes, lest the people should be stinted in their pernicious beverage. As it is the most profitable produce, rents are often partially, and sometimes, I believe, entirely paid in this article.

The law may also be said to encourage the making of brandy, though the legislature must feel the bad effects of the enactments at present in force in this respect. Instead of prohibiting tubs, under a certain size, being used in distilling, the law limits the capacity of the pans, and

thus makes every farmer a distiller. Some check to intemperance has been attempted by forming temperance societies ; their success, however, has as yet been very trifling ; and when I have heard them named, it has been generally with some expression of ridicule. I have often seen little boys, not more than nine or ten years of age, toss off a dram raw ; and at last was so accustomed to the sight, that I have been quite surprised when some youth has refused the glass. Such instances did not amount to more than three or four during my whole sojourn in Sweden ; and if a third person was by, he was sure to appropriate what had been declined by the disciple of abstinence.

After passing through the little town of Eksjö, the country takes a more favourable aspect. Towards the north-west extends the great lake Wetter, only second to the Wenern in extent, and remarkable for the storms with which it is agitated. Near Grenna are the remarkable ruins of Brabrehus, perched upon a

lofty cliff, several hundred feet above the lake. There is little navigation through this part, the communication being principally at the northern extremity, near Motala. The Gotha canal has only been lately completed, and the advantages arising to the country from it must be already evident, by the number of vessels that cross the interior of the country, and thus avoid the payment of the Sound dues. It is in contemplation to make the canal wide enough for large ships, to allow those bound for Russia taking this route; but this project will, no doubt, be resisted by the people of Gottenburg, who would thereby lose the advantage of the goods passing through their hands. A fortress is also being built, to protect the navigation of the canal in case of emergency; and as a central spot upon which to fall back. But as, by the present plans, the fortifications will not be completed before the lapse of fifty years, and as before that time the fate of Sweden will pro-

bably have undergone a change, such slow precautions are little better than useless.

The canal was only required to connect the Wetter and the Wenern, a few miles between Motala and the lake Roxen, and the space between its eastern extremity and Södrekopping, where it meets the Baltic. Though a great national work, it does not present such difficulties as might be expected in crossing about four hundred miles. Near Trollehætta, the falls have required many locks; but, in other parts, the facilities were such that the undertaking should have been concluded long ago.

A pleasing contrast to the dull towns of the south of Sweden displays itself in Linköping and Norköpping. The latter part of these names is pronounced chiopping, and bears some analogy to the chipping prefixed to Barnet and Norton, and, I believe, some other places in England. In Sweden, a great many of the towns in the neighbourhood of the Mœ-

lare and Wenern have this distinction, which signifies trading-place. At Norköpping there are large manufactories of cloth, nearly equal to that made in Germany, and protected against foreign, and particularly British, produce, by heavy duties. It is the most thriving town that I had yet gone through since entering the country ; and its fresh painted and commodious houses evince its commercial prosperity. The tedious regularity of the streets is partially broken by the splendid rapids that pass through the city, and give motion to numberless mills. The walls in many places are covered with cloth left to dry, and an American activity pervades the whole place.

I happened to leave Norköpping in the afternoon, and meeting with an accident which delayed me on the road, I did not reach Nyköping till three in the morning. When I found myself in the inn yard, I discovered that it would be no easy matter to get inside the house. With the help of the peasant, I at last

aroused a girl, who turned out very lightly clad, and, moreover, seemed very cross at my arrival. Having satisfied herself that I intended to stop till the morning, she made me a bed, and left me without a candle. Upon my asking for one, she turned to me fiercely, and asked me what I could want with one, as the moon shone quite brightly enough. In summer, I have rarely found such a thing offered me at any of the post-houses ; and the accommodation of other sorts was on the same scanty scale. The washhand-basins, in particular, are the smallest I have met with, and might be mistaken for large slop-basins.

The people, it cannot be denied, are generally very obliging and civil ; but many things that to us are necessities of the first class, seem to them ridiculous luxuries, asked for only to give trouble. Whoever, therefore, travels in Sweden by land, ought either to make up his mind to do without many things to which he is accustomed, or to be preceded by a waggon as large

as Noah's ark, filled with every thing necessary to incipient housekeeping. One thing is to be said in favour of the inns, they always have clean linen; but their beds are so short and narrow, as to be more like coffins than any thing to take only temporary rest in. How the Swedes, who are by no means short, can put up with this deficiency, I cannot say; I know that I have often risen more tired than when I lay down.

Luckily, in summer the steam navigation is in such general use, and is so expeditious, that in most quarters the journey can be much abridged, and posting needs be but partially resorted to. The fares on steam-boats are ridiculously low, from the cheapness of fuel; and the great habit of travelling which seems to pervade the nation. The vessels are tolerably well fitted up, and accidents rarely occur; and comforts, at least superior to those of the best post-houses are to be found on board.

I was now close to the metropolis, and met

with little to mark the change. The country near the lake Mœlare is certainly the best in Sweden; though, in the part I was now crossing, there was little to attract notice. The same long forests of pine, relieved but too rarely by a wooden house, cease to please after the first few days, and the eye rests with delight on the little towns, or rather villages, that succeed each other at long intervals. Large droves of cattle, not the fatter for their journey, impede the way, and give the first notice of a larger city. At last, when least expected, the city of Stockholm appears, and a new view presents itself.

CHAPTER IV.

Stockholm—Public buildings—Statues—The Diet.

THERE is little to announce the neighbourhood of a capital at the distance of a mile from Stockholm ; and even on arriving at the Horns Tull, or Southern Barrier, there are few signs of a town. None of those taverns and pleasure-grounds that surround Copenhagen and Hamburg are to be met with here. Stockholm has, in fact, no suburbs ; and even the ground included within its limits, is far from covered with houses. For the first mile within the

Horns Tull the road is lined on either side with gardens, more intended for profit than amusement; though, from the rocky nature of the soil, much of the former could not be reasonably expected.

On passing the barrier, a sentry asked me where I came from; but on my telling him that I would leave my passport at the police-office, I was not detained: a little further I met with a greater check, in the shape of some custom-house officers, who did not let me off so easily. My luggage underwent a much stricter examination here than at Helsingborg, as little care is taken to protect the revenue, except at Stockholm and Gottenburg.

There exists a salutary regulation in Sweden, by which a custom-house officer, if he strongly suspects an individual of having smuggled goods concealed about his person, is at liberty to search him; but must first tender fifty rix dollars banco. Should he fail in discovering any thing, the searched person is at liberty to

keep the money; but, if the contrary be the case, he forfeits both the goods and the rix dollars. This rule acts as a proper check upon the petty tyranny of underlings, which is so vexatious all over the continent; though here, from the universal civility of all classes, I should think it less needed than elsewhere.

At last I entered the more thickly-populated part of the town. The buildings as yet were mean enough, as the Sodermalm, or southern part of the city, is chiefly inhabited by the lower classes. A sudden turn brought me to the brow of a steep descent, from which the island of Stockholm, and the harbour, were visible. A most incessant din here assails the ears; on either side of the foot of the draw-bridge, that connects the isle with the mainland, are large wharfs, called Iernvagen,* where the staple of the country is stamped before exportation.

The isle of Stockholm is connected with the

* Iron wharf.

mainland, both north and south, by bridges. On the south there is a double lock, through which the craft employed on the Lake Mælare pass from the Baltic. On the north a handsome granite bridge, used much as a promenade, from its being the only spot in the capital with a *trottoir*, connects the place with another isle* and the Norrmalm. Besides the latter and Södermalm, the city consists of eight holms, three of which, however, are not much built upon, and are chiefly occupied by the government. Few cities that I have seen are more beautifully situated, or present a more delightful variety of height and water.

There is a steep hill called Musse-back, near St. Catherine's church in the south; and from this spot a capital bird's-eye view is obtained of the whole series of islands and the surrounding country; but to the stranger the far most striking approach will be along the splen-

* " Helge Andes Holm"—Holy Ghost Island.

did lake Mœlare in a steamer. The most commanding object is the Royal Palace, that towers over the rest of the city, and, though in itself remarkable only for its size, is very imposing from its great elevation. Some few years back, the lofty spire of Riddarholm Kyrka added much to the beauty; the church has since been gutted by fire, and the spire has fallen in. All that now remains is the bare walls and the royal coffins; among them is that of Charles XII., and some of the later kings. The fire lasted three days, and seems only to have stopped when every thing combustible had been exhausted.

Though the meanest in point of streets, the Isle of Stockholm is far the most interesting in most points. The Palace, the Parliament House, the Cathedral, and the Storr Torg in the great square, are all noted in the history of the country. The last place in particular is indelibly marked as the scene of the massacre of the nobles by Christiern II. of Denmark.

In its present state it little deserves the name of great ; it is even one of the smallest squares in the capital ; but before the erection of the Exchange, which has robbed it of half its surface, it extended to the " Stora Kyrka," or Cathedral, and was then certainly the largest open place in the isle.

One of its houses still preserves the memory of the bloody tragedy enacted there ; its front is studded with square prominent stones, equal in number to the victims who fell on that day beneath the stroke of the executioner. Christiern, in the mad project of annihilating the whole of the Swedish aristocracy, spared neither the aged nor the young. Gustaf Wasa's father, sinking under the weight of years, fell, as well as some noble children, of an age so tender as not to understand the fate they were about to undergo.

Christiern should have learnt from history, that such attempts can never succeed, that with every precaution that the cruellest policy can

devise, some remains of the persecuted race will escape, and, at a future day, avenge the wrongs of their country and family upon those that have trampled on their rights.

The first deficiency of which a stranger is made sensible in Stockholm, is the want of a real inn. Lodgings of every variety are to be met with in most streets, where apartments can be taken furnished for any period; but a real hotel, where the traveller can be provided with board as well as lodging, is yet a desideratum in this capital. Some establishment of the kind is contemplated, and signs of its future existence are visible in Brunkebergs Torget, but the progress of the works is so slow, that any person who considers his comfort had better postpone any visit he intends to the Swedish capital for at least the next two years.

I had provided myself with cards of different places of entertainment as I progressed through the country, but an external view of most was sufficient to satisfy me that I need look no far-

ther. At last, finding the horses that had brought me the last stage were becoming tired, I came to an anchor in a street running out of "Drottning-gatan," or Queen-street, the longest and widest of Stockholm. The rooms were clean, and had no lack of looking-glasses, but no carpet covered the floor; a wooden box by the side of the stove also corroborated certain suspicions of the general habits of the people, which the smell of tobacco in every quarter had awakened.

As soon as the landlady returned and heard of my arrival, a paper was given to me, printed in English, French, and German, containing questions concerning the traveller, his country, business, and the period he intended to remain in Stockholm. On my first visit to Sweden the questions amounted to thirteen or fourteen, and included inquiries which could not regard the police at all, such as the religion, &c., of the new comer. They had, however, been now curtailed, and reduced to four; which, being

duly answered, were despatched to the Overstathallare, who probably lighted his pipe with them; at least no further notice was taken of them, and no personal appearance before any authorities was required of me.

The system of clubs has not been carried very far in Stockholm; there are two, called the Great and Little Society, where the members can dine, but I suspect that the fare is indifferent, as the single men generally dine at Restaurateurs. The one I chiefly visited was frequented by officers of the guards, who have no mess. The waiting is entirely in the hands of the women, and I suspect that, in some cases, their beauty makes the badness of the dinner be overlooked. Cooking is not the Swedes' forte; and their bills of fare display no great variety, either as regards the material or the mode of dressing it. Mutton is much less used than elsewhere; probably the great number of wolves that infest the country is one reason. As for their beef, the journey from Smaland, whence the

cattle chiefly comes, is enough to destroy the little fat it acquired in the south.

In the middle of the day the liveliest part of Stockholm is the Norrbro, which is crowded when the weather is fine. Close to it is a garden, nearly on a level with the water, where a coffee-house has been built; and which, in summer, is a most frequented spot. Formerly smoking was prohibited in the streets of Stockholm, as well as in the other towns; since the cholera raged in Sweden, however, this indulgence, which was restricted to the garden on the Norrbro, has been permitted throughout the city.

Stockholm is not deficient in monuments; and those which it possesses, though few, are very good. Gustaf Adolph's equestrian statue, in the square of the same name, is not only beautiful itself, but erected in a most favourable situation. The clearness of the air has preserved the bronze unclouded and bright, and the pedestal of polished granite is as resplendent as

a mirror. The statue of Gustaf III., near the harbour, has been peculiarly admired; it is the work of the Swedish sculptor Sergil, who has represented the king as on his return from the Finnish war. The figure is on foot, advancing with a wreath, and is superior to any modern statue I have seen in the north. The quay upon which it stands is of granite, and was built by the Dalecarlian regiment, and a more beautiful specimen of masonry than it and the Lejonback,* or ascent in front of the palace, which is constructed of the same material, is not to be found.

The Cathedral, or "Stora Kyrka," is imposing neither in its exterior nor interior; its chief internal ornament is a large figure of St. George, or "St. Joran," on horseback, killing a dragon. I never could find out how this champion gained admittance into the church, where he is as misplaced as the equestrian statue of Charles IX.

* Lion hill, so called from two bronze figures of that animal.

in the middle of the quire of the cathedral of Ströngnös. It is in this place that the king holds his coronation; and though close to the palace, he rides back. The horse used on this occasion is shod with silver, with the shoes loosely tacked on, that the people may have an opportunity of tearing them off while the king is on his back. This custom may be considered a set-off to the scramble for medals at the English coronation.

The only memorial of Gustaf IV. is a granite obelisk raised by him, in compliance with his father's wish, in testimony of the fidelity of the burghers of Stockholm, during the first Finnish war; at present it serves more to call to the recollection the loss of that fine province by the son, than its defence by the father. There is, however, one monument which cannot but recall gratifying events to the mind. It is the statue of Gustaf Ericson Wasa, the father of his country, that stands appropriately in Riddarhus-square, in front of the Parliament-

house. His long beard, sweeping over his breast, gives him a most venerable appearance, and the inscription is particularly suitable to his great merits. It is dedicated, "*Gustavo ex nobili cive optimo regi.*" In the Riddarhus assemble the four Estates, who each form a separate house. The nobles, the priests, the burghers, and the peasants have each a distinct voice; but as the questions are decided by a majority of houses, it is easy for the king, who has the casting vote, to divide the whole body, and thus rule himself.

The session, which is called *Riks-dagar*, takes place only every fifth year; but during the intermediate time deputies elected by each of the Estates, assemble every autumn in the capital, to audit the accounts, and make a report of what requires the notice of the following Diet. These "revisors" are, I believe, eight in number, and are employed two or three months in their investigations. The deputies of the peasants are paid by their constituents, a

was the case of old in England; and I have been told that though mere boors, many of them are particularly shrewd and useful members. Among the portraits of illustrious Swedes, two or three were pointed out to me as likenesses of peasants who had distinguished themselves in the Diet. One of them, clothed like the rest in coarse cloth, is represented as having his coat lined with crimson velvet. This arose from the queen having made him a present of some of this article as a mark of her esteem; and upon her asking him, the next time she saw him, why he had lined an old coat with it, he gallantly inquired, where he could better place her majesty's present than next to his heart.

One of the prettiest spots in Stockholm is Charles XIII.'s square, close to Gustaf Adolph's "torg." As its sides are planted with rows of trees, it bears a nearer approach to a portion of the Champs Elysées than what we call a square. Its chief ornament is a statue of the king, whose name the place bears, supported at the corners

of the pedestals by vast lions. It does not exactly appear for what act this prince shares the same honours as the three first Gustafs, while Charles XII. is nowhere to be seen. Perhaps as the last of a race to which the country mainly owes its renown for three centuries, he received a compliment which the others earned by their own merit.

One feature, however, belonging to this monument is, that it is the only one which enjoys the doubtful honour of having a sentry to protect it. This guard was found necessary to protect it since the discovery of a distich attached to it, that accused the king, in very coarse terms, of having introduced the French rabble, into Sweden.

Nor is this the only insult that his effigy has been subjected to. Charles, while Duke of Södremaland, was at the head of the navy, and accordingly is represented resting his right hand on an anchor. If viewed from a particular place to the left, the anchor is out of sight, and

the ring only and upper part are visible. Owing to the striking resemblance that they bear to a tailor's goose, the nickname of "Skrøddare," the Swedish for a knight of the shears, has been given and is still applied to the statue.

CHAPTER V.

Gustaf III.'s differences with the nobles—The theatre—Assassination of Gustaf.

BEFORE the reign of Gustaf III., the court of Sweden could boast of little refinement. The disastrous wars of Charles XII. had so much shaken the resources of the country, that half a century did not suffice to restore it to its proper position among the other states of Europe. With the accession of Gustaf, a new era commenced, and had his views at the beginning of his reign not gradually hurried him on at the close to attempt the enslavement of

his country, he might have avoided his miserable end, and left a name worthy of the first place in the history of Sweden.

On ascending the throne, he found the royal prerogative reduced almost to a nonentity, and the country governed by a factious nobility. It had divided into two parties, distinguished by the names of Hats and Caps. The former were adherents to the Russian policy, and the latter were said to be under the influence of French gold. Between the care of both factions, Sweden was in a fair way of becoming a Russian province, when the king determined upon subverting both, and asserting his own mastery.

With this view, he endeavoured to gain the goodwill of the army, and instituted the order of Wasa, which he conferred on subaltern officers. Before this period, there were two orders of knighthood in Sweden; the Seraphim, which answers to our Garter, and is limited to twenty-two members, and a military order called the Sword, which I believe is acquired, like the

Legion of Honour, by length of service, as well as distinguished conduct. Charles XIII. has since added a fourth order, which bears his name, and is confined to freemasons.

After working secretly for some time, the king thought the moment was come for declaring his intentions. Accordingly, on the 19th of August, 1772, he went to the place where the Estates were assembled, and entered into a dispute with the members. The troops, who were devoted to him, received with acclamations the changes he proposed to make in the constitution. These alterations greatly circumscribed the privileges of the nobility, and were naturally not very palatable to that part of the Diet.

To ensure their compliance, Gustaf surrounded the assembly-house with soldiers and cannon, and, followed by his military staff, entered, and proposed the new constitution. Resistance would have been of no avail, and the members were compelled to sign it.

Flushed with his success, Gustaf forgot that

he might, some day, be in the same humiliating position himself, and descended to a wanton and cruel exercise of power. Drawing a prayer-book out of his pocket, the king forced the assembled members, surrounded as they were with grenadiers and bayonets, to join in singing a hymn, returning thanks for their own destruction, and that of the constitution. This insult was not soon forgotten by the vanquished nobles; and at a later period Gustaf was made to feel how dangerous it is to ridicule men after injuring them.

Having, by this *coup d'état*, secured to himself undisputed authority, and checked the influence of Catherine of Russia, who, by a connexion with a numerous and venal nobility, ruled Sweden with an almost unlimited sway, he next turned his mind to the internal improvement of his subjects. Being endowed with great literary talent, and being an admirer of France, with some of whose *savans* he was in constant correspondence, he endeavoured to in-

troduce at home the manners of that country, and succeeded but too well in sowing the first seeds of the levity of its court in Stockholm. Even the language underwent a change by the admixture of a vast number of French expressions, which have maintained their place, and give a piebald appearance to the tongue. To complete the innovation, the laxity of morals that distinguished the court of Louis XV. found a ready admission among the courtiers.

Gustaf further amused himself by a tour in Italy and France, during 1783 and 1784, and brought back to Sweden most of those specimens of art that adorn the royal residences. Among others, he purchased a statue of Endymion, a *chef d'œuvre* of the Grecian school, for which Napoleon is said to have offered his son, Gustaf Adolph, the sum of three hundred thousand francs. It was on this tour that Gustaf, who travelled under the name of the Count of Haga, a palace in the neighbourhood of Stock-

being the *mirror* of *al Cante de Haga* *de multi vici e poci poci.* Kings so seldom travel that all through whose countries they pass seem afraid to plunder them too little, and are much astonished when they find that repeated imposition makes a naturally liberal man rather close.

Among his other literary tastes, the king was passionately fond of the drama. He was himself the author of several creditable plays, and often performed in the beautiful little theatre that he erected at the palace of Gripsholm. Wishing to give his countrymen the same tastes as himself, at his return from Italy he built the Opera-house at Stockholm, and at his death bequeathed it to the city.

The front of this edifice extends over the whole of one side of Gustaf Adolph's square, and is exactly matched by the palace of the young princes, sons of Oscar, that faces it. Neither have great pretension to beauty; but

combined with the king's palace, on the island of Stockholm, which forms the fourth side, the effect of the whole is remarkably fine.

The distribution of the interior differs from that of any other theatre that I have seen ; and as it has been the scene of a drama in real life of no slight importance in the history of Sweden, it bears an interest greater than places of the kind generally deserve. Gustaf was fond of display, and carried his notions of etiquette rather far. Every one was expected to alight from their carriages when he passed, and no covered head was allowed to pass the quadrangle of the palace. The building of a new theatre gave him an opportunity of gratifying his love of show, and he availed himself of it. Determined that his court should form as great a part of the spectacle as the stage itself, he not only took up the whole of the centre for the royal box, but reserved about a third of the pit, immediately below it, for his household and the principal officers of state. This privileged place is

raised above the rest of the floor, and, when filled, presents a very brilliant appearance. At present, the king's ignorance of the Swedish tongue is a bar to a frequent show of the kind. Gustaf was often there, surrounded by his court, little foreseeing that he would one day lie bleeding on the very spot on which he delighted to exhibit his splendour.

At the beginning of 1792 Gustaf, alarmed at the progress of the French revolution, and excited by an ardent love of military glory, formed a plan for relieving Louis XVI., and entered into negotiations with other powers for an invasion of France. When the scheme, however, was laid before the Emperor of Austria and the King of Prussia, it was far from favourably received, and Spain, which had been lavish in its promises, gradually fell back. Gustaf was left to act by himself; but, in spite of these obstacles, persevered in his design. With the hope of establishing some order in his finances, before leaving his kingdom, he assembled the States.

He valued himself on his management of the Diet; and observed that he was the only sovereign who had convoked a public body of that description with success. The business on this occasion was transacted to his satisfaction; and, after passing some resolutions that strengthened his prerogative, the Diet peaceably concluded its session. Nothing now remained for him to do at home: he was on the point of embarking, when an unforeseen event cut off his prospects of glory and his life together.

His conduct in 1772 and 1789, when he succeeded in making himself entirely absolute, was not forgotten by those from whom he had wrested the power which he now possessed. The nobles still smarted under the sense of their defeat, and a few of the boldest judged this the last opportunity they might have of avenging their wrongs, and ridding their country of a man whom they looked upon as a tyrant. In a class so large as the nobility of Sweden, there could not but be many who would be

ready to undertake the most hazardous enterprise. Yet they had been so crushed by Gustaf, that they despaired of any advantage by open measures, and a few, who had probably been galled by private injuries, determined, since they could not subdue, to assassinate him. The moral character of the king was generally allowed to be of the worst kind; his neglect of his wife, who was an amiable princess, and his licentious habits, had diverted from him the affections and respect of many who were admirers of his great talents; and his lavish waste of the public money was most severely felt in so poor a country as Sweden. Under such circumstances, about ten persons, the greater part nobles, came to the resolution of taking the first opportunity of murdering him.

The conspirators, among whom were some in the constant habit of attending on the king, formed many projects to effect their design, and made several attempts without success.

That some blow was about to be struck, was generally suspected; and the king received more than one anonymous hint, to beware of the impending danger. He, however, was too brave to take notice of these communications, and declared that were he to listen to every idle rumour of plots, he should be afraid to drink even a glass of water.

Meanwhile, his enemies were preparing their plans, and one of their number, named Ankarstrom, offered to do the deed. He was a noble by birth, and had served in the guards till his twenty-fourth year, when he retired to his estate with the rank of captain in the army. He was, while there, accused of having spoken disparagingly of the king to the peasants. Though the charge was never fully brought home to him, he was confined for a time in the castle of Wisby, in the island of Gottland. At a later period, when Gustaf put an end to the power of the nobles, and forced them to assent, in the

"Riddarhus," or Parliament-house, to his innovations, Ankarstrom was present; and, nothing daunted by the presence of the king, or of his grenadiers, he boldly addressed the assembly, and deprecated the violation of the constitution in no measured terms. It has been supposed that he had also private grounds of dislike, and jealousy has been placed among the number; but several circumstances connected with Gustaf's character, would lead one to infer that that passion had no part in exciting his hatred to the king.

Whatever were the causes, his animosity was so great, that before his joining with the Counts Horn and Ribbing, and his other confederates, he had intended to murder the king. An attempt was made at Gefle, while the States were sitting, and another was planned for carrying him off near a noted tavern, called Mon Bijou, near "Norr Tull," or the Northern Barrier, at the end of Drottning-gatan, when on his

way to Haga. Both failed, and the conspirators were obliged to defer their intentions till some new opportunity should offer.

An occasion presented itself but too soon : a masquerade was announced to be given at the Opera-house, and the king was expected to be there. Twice it was put off, through some cause or other ; but, at last, it was definitively settled that it should take place. While at supper on that evening, an anonymous letter was brought to Gustaf, containing the following words :

“Sire,—Deign to listen to the advice of a man who, not being attached to your service, nor solicitous of your favour, flatters not your crimes, but is still desirous of averting the danger with which you are threatened. Be assured that a plot is formed to assassinate you. Those who have entered into it are furious at having been foiled last week, by the ball being countermanded. They have resolved to execute their scheme this day. Remain at home, and avoid balls the remainder of the year—thus

the fanaticism of criminality will be allowed to evaporate.

“Do not endeavour to discover the author of this letter; the damnable project against your life is come to his knowledge by accident. Be assured, however, that he has no interest whatever in forewarning you of your intended fate.

“If your mercenary troops had made use of violence against the citizens of Gefle, the writer of this letter would have fought you sword in hand, but he detests assassination.”

When the king had cast his eyes over the letter, he turned pale; he looked undetermined how to act, and showed it to those who sat at table. Among the guests was his private secretary, Baron Bjelke, a man of an ancient family, formerly allied to the kings of Sweden, as one of his ancestors, Sumila Bjelke, was one of John III.'s wives. He easily recognised the hand of the writer; it was Colonel Pontus Lilljenhorn's. Though deeply implicated in the

plot, Bjelke had sufficient command over his countenance to exhibit no alarm. At the desire of the king, he took up the letter, and, having carefully read it, declared his belief that it had been written with the intention of intimidating him. Others, and among them Baron Essen, entreated the king to remain in the palace; but the words of the traitor had had their effect, and Gustaf, with a laugh, announced that he would still go.

Baron Bjelke, having so far attained his object, hastened to apprise his friends of the king's determination. It had been previously concerted between him and his accomplices, that, if the king should go to the masquerade, Bjelke should send his watch to a certain jeweller's shop in Drottning-gatan to be repaired; if not, his snuffbox. When the messenger came with the fatal signal, Count Ribbing was waiting, and immediately left the place to warn his friends that their victim was about to fall into their hands. Bjelke, in the mean time, wen

Count Horn had the
conspicuous appearance
purpose was to get
glazed in a domino, like
Eisen. Count Horn said
"Good evening, fair one,"
to Ankarstrom. The latter
that he was pushed by the
of the letter flashing on
to retreat. It was too
already close to him; and
take, tapped him on the
turally turned to see who
while in the act of doing

Though the pistol was loaded with seven rusty nails, besides two balls, and some small shot, the fall of the king was not instantaneous. The assassin had drawn a jagged knife, prepared for the purpose, and was going to plunge it in his heart, when Gustaf sunk on a bench. Ankarstrom having dropped the dagger and pistol on the ground, as well as a second which he had intended for himself, retreated unobserved among the crowd.

As soon as he could be heard, Gustaf called out that the doors should be locked, and that nobody should be allowed to depart before he was searched, and had given his name. He also gave orders that the gates of Stockholm should be secured for three days. All the guests submitted to the search, and Ankarstrom happened to be the last to write down his name. The king was then borne off to the palace on a litter, writhing in such intense agony, that his bearers were obliged to halt on entering the hall. Though the perspiration ran down his

face, he did not utter a groan ; he merely asked if Ankarstrom was among the company at the theatre, and on being told he was, said, "My mind forebodes that that man is my murderer." The pistol and dagger were found on the ground, and the next day exposed to public view, when they were both identified by a gunsmith and cutler of Stockholm, as having been the one made, and the other repaired, by them for Ankarstrom.

The latter, upon leaving the theatre had returned home, and after saying his prayers, retired to rest. In the morning, when the officers of justice went to arrest him, he came forward and surrendered himself, acknowledging that he had committed the deed, and that though he was aware of the enormity of the crime, he had undertaken it for the good of his country. When brought before General Armsfelt, the detested favourite of the king, who had led him into the evil courses that reflected so much disgrace upon Gustaf's character, Ankarstrom

looked scornfully at the man, and, upon his threatening him with the greatest tortures if he refused to declare his accomplices, said slowly, and in a tone of ineffable contempt, "Presume not to expect, audacious criminal, that I will obey! You are, yourself, mainly the cause of what has happened." He appeared a kind of enthusiast, and, during the time he remained in prison, often declared his regret that he had subjected the king to such protracted suffering; and excused the cruel mode in which he had loaded the pistol, by saying that the death of the king was of such consequence as to require his taking any means to make sure of it.

Gustaf, laid on his side, suffered the most agonizing torments without flinching. At one time he had hopes that he might still recover; but the rusty nails which had entered his body brought on mortification, and the certainty of his fate was announced to him. It was clear he had buoyed himself up till that moment; for a visible change took place in his manner,

and he begged his physician, with tears in his eyes, to protract his life, were it only for three days. When the first shock had passed, he returned to his former state of mind, and feeling that there was no time to be lost, called his brother Charles to his bed, and appointed him regent during the minority of his son, whom he fixed upon for his successor. This precaution was not without reason, for doubts had been thrown on the legitimacy of his son, and the Duke of Södremanland might have claimed the throne as next heir at a moment of such public agitation.

The greatest trial remained, Gustaf had evidently dreaded it; for it was only when the hand of death was upon him, that he summoned up the courage to take leave of his injured wife; and Charles had only time to lead her from his bedside, when the death-rattle was heard, and Gustaf was relieved from his agony.

In the mean time, Ankarstrom was calmly

awaiting the dreadful punishment of his crime. He frequently expressed sorrow at having caused so much pain to the king, and when the guns announced the accession of Gustaf IV., Adolph, he declared himself relieved by the king's sufferings being at an end. Though strictly guarded, Baron Bjelke had found means to send him the lancet that he had concealed under his cuff. Ankarstrom, however, had determined to brave the worst, and gave it up to his keeper, declaring that he would not add suicide to his other offences.

Though he at first denied having any accomplices, he was afterwards induced to confess that several persons were privy to his intentions. Nine of them were in consequence arrested; but three defeated the law by taking away their lives themselves. Bjelke took the poison he had carried with him to the opera, and died raving in the presence of Armfelt, before whom he was brought to be examined. Count Horn hanged himself in prison, and a third followed

I think strange. The lives of the conspirators were saved by Russia's having refused to be drawn into the war. It was with infinitely more of the intention to make an experiment of the case than of the minister himself. Some were released on their trial, and released in the end others were imprisoned for a few years.

Among the prisoners passed upon these relations there is one which stands rather strange to English ears. It is a man Major-general David Barclay he manifested strong pleasure in his imprisonment in Russia. It was at the house of this gentleman that the meetings of the conspirators had taken place: but he had throughout denied any knowledge of their purpose. It was therefore thought necessary to bring him to a confession of the fact: and, by way of hastening it, he was subjected to the severest confinement that could be devised. He was a very old man, and particularly fond of smoking. He was accordingly debarred from the use of tobacco, and kept continually awake.

Once he succeeded in defeating the intention of his keepers, and, sending for the officer of the guard, desired him to bring him paper, as he wished to write a confession. At the same time he expressed a wish to enjoy a smoke, and said, that unless he was allowed this indulgence he should not feel equal to the task that he had imposed upon himself. The officer answered that it was against his orders, but as the confession was a very desirable object, he would take upon himself the responsibility of breaking them. He then provided his prisoner with what was necessary, and the baron, after consuming a vast quantity of tobacco and paper, handed to him what appeared a most voluminous confession. The document was forwarded to Stockholm, but when opened, presented, to the astonishment of the readers, an elaborate treatise on the prisoner's favourite weed, entering into every detail of its history and introduction. Little was to be expected from so contumacious an individual, and, after three

years, he was released from confinement, and left, "to the punishment of God and his own conscience." He retired to Denmark, and lived there till past eighty years of age, externally at least little affected by his sentence.

There is a curious circumstance connected with another of the parties implicated. After receiving his wound, Gustaf mentioned Count Ribbing as being in the conspiracy, before any of the accomplices were known. The following reason was at the time given for his suspicions: There was in Stockholm an old woman, named Arfvedson, who lived by telling fortunes, and who had gained such a reputation, that the queen, Sophia Magdalene, sent for her. The hag sent back word that her power was local, and that she could not prophesy abroad; probably wishing to try the queen's belief. She was not disappointed; for the queen came to her *incognita*. It is said that Gustaf also visited her; in answer to some question, she told him to beware of a man he should find

on returning home, with a drawn weapon. On entering the palace, the king heard somebody in the dark near his apartment, and rushing forward, felt that he had a drawn sword under his cloak. He asked the stranger who he was, and what business he had with arms near his room. The intruder answered that he was Count Ribbing, and that he had been going to some lady, and on such occasions always held himself ready to defend himself. Gustaf, at the time, did not like the explanation, but Count Ribbing, muttering some excuse, bowed and retired.

Ankarstrom alone was reserved for the extreme punishment of the law, which, on this occasion, armed itself with unnecessary cruelty. A scaffold was erected opposite the Riddarhus, in the square, in which stands the statue of Gustaf Wasa. Upon it were exhibited the pistol and dagger used at the masquerade, with the words "John Jacob Ankarstrom, the king's murderer." Here he was exposed to public view for two

being confined by a collar to a chain, after which he underwent the punishment called "spö," or rods. Forty pair of these is considered in Sweden a capital punishment; and for three following days, the utmost number was inflicted on him in different squares. On the third, he was so exhausted with pain, that at the conclusion he was more dead than alive. His right hand was then cut off by a scavenger, to increase the disgrace of the punishment, and his head was severed from his body, which was quartered, and the parts laid on wheels, elevated on posts, at the place of execution. Conspicuous above the rest, his head was planted on a pole, with the hand beneath it. The very day after, a paper was found attached to it, with these words: "Blessed be the hand that saved its father-land."

Such was the miserable end of this regicide, who seems to have been actuated to the commission of this crime, more through the mistaken notion of saving his country than any

private impulse. During his confinement in prison, he showed a gentleness and solemnity that operated powerfully upon all who saw him; when excited, he spoke in a language resembling that used in Scripture, and must rather be looked upon as a fanatic than a cold-blooded assassin. The wrongs inflicted on Sweden by the extravagance of the king, and the violation of the constitution, made him look upon Gustaf as a declared enemy to his country, and in his confession he says, "I thought it best to risk my life for the public good, and I determined rather to die than live a miserable life, and see my native country daily threatened with new misfortunes by an unrighteous despot, who thought only of himself."

While I was in Stockholm, there lodged in the same house as myself, an austere-looking man, whom I met frequently on the stairs, but who always turned aside, and seemed to avoid communion with any one. I was afterwards told that this man was the son of Ankarstrom; but did

not bear his name. He lived in Finland; and merely came occasionally to Sweden, which, after his father's unhappy fate, must be scarce bearable to him.

For many years after the death of Gustaf, no masquerade was allowed in Stockholm; latterly they have been occasionally given at the Opera-house; but, I believe, none of the royal family ever attend them. There is in them but little attraction, the men going unmasked, and the female part of the company, being rarely composed of any thing much above servant-girls. During my stay at Stockholm I was frequently at the theatre, but found little there to admire, either in the acting or the pieces. The latter were for the most part French, and sometimes German translations; and I do not recollect a single original Swedish drama. On one occasion, I sat out a tragedy of six acts. The title it bore, of Gustaf Adolph in Munich, would alone have induced the audience so far to tax their patience.

The best play I saw was Hamlet, and even that seemed not agreeable to the multitude. The house was not as full as usual, and, I thought, more sleepy. The tragedy has been shorn of many of its beauties in the translation, and the whole of the scene in the churchyard has been omitted. The part of Hamlet, was creditably filled by the best actor, Armloff. The rest of the characters, with the exception of Ophelia, were often ludicrous. The fair Ophelia, was represented by Mademoiselle Höquist, who has the reputation of being the first actress in Sweden, and who had added an additional feather to her cap, by a visit to Paris.

A great part of her fame, I fear, is owing to her very pretty face, which undoubtedly surpasses in beauty those of her fellow-actresses; and those manners which she had acquired in France, and which it was very easy to detect, in my humble opinion did injury rather than good to her acting. The general defect of all the

performers of Stockholm is a want of liveliness of soul. Every vaudeville goes off like lead, and the smartest French dialogue is repeated like a dull lesson by schoolboys. Mademoiselle Höquist in this respect surpasses the rest, but is still faulty. She sometimes is equal to some of our third-rate actresses ; but a thin voice, a disagreeable scraggy figure, and a bad manner of addressing her remarks, rather to the audience than to those she was supposed to speak to, are errors which she will find it difficult to overcome, and will prevent her from ever being much admired on any stage but that of Stockholm.

The orchestra is better composed than the company ; and, considering the size of the house, which is as large as the Lyceum, the musicians are numerous. The theatre, still being in a manner royal property, is under the management of three directors, all military men, and little encouragement seems to be given to native talent. The history of Sweden, the

reigns of the four Gustavi, Eric XIV., and others of their kings, all present subjects enough for the dramatist ; and it is lamentable that a nation possessing such opportunities of producing original pieces, should so long remain content with French translation and Italian song.

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CHAPTER VI.

Sigtuna — Upsala — The cathedral — The palace — The murder of the Stures.

AMONGST the numerous fiords that branch off from the main body of the lake Mælare, there is one that takes a northern direction, and, by a river that runs into it, communicates with the University of Upsala. It is equal in beauty to the other parts of that noble lake, presenting every variety of breadth ; at one time expanding into an extensive sheet, and at another confining itself between heights that are wooded to the water's edge. At Stæke, which answers to the latter description of scenery,

formerly stood the castle of the turbulent Archbishop Trolle, last catholic prelate in Sweden. It will give a sufficient insight into this man's character to mention, that he pertinaciously seconded Christiern the tyrant, and passed his life in endeavouring to establish the Danes in the government of his country. In this fastness he maintained a factious opposition, till obliged to yield to the superior influence and arms of Gustaf Wasa.

Some miles further north a few houses, built irregularly along the border of the fiord, present all that now remains of the city of Sigtuna, the original capital of Sweden. Some historians, who love remote dates, pretend that it was founded by Siggo, a king who lived in the same age as Semiramis. Time has not been more sparing here than at Babylon, and aided by the Russians, who burnt it six or seven hundred years ago, has laid low for ever the pride of Sigtuna. A ruinous old tower or two is all that now remains, and so insignificant is it in other

matters, that a pair of horses could not be procured, and I had to wait three hours before they could be fetched from a farm-house, four miles distant.

After its destruction, it was succeeded in its metropolitan honours by Old Upsala, which in its turn has fallen back into its original insignificance. It was here that the great heathen temple of Thor stood in ancient times.

The spot upon which the present town of Upsala has been built, and the country to the south of it as far as Flottsund, was formerly covered with water. The borders of the Mælare are generally allowed to have receded; but there is some difference of opinion as to the cause of this change. Some attribute it to the dyke cut by Olaf the Holy, of Norway, at the Söder Sluss of Stockholm, by which it discharges itself into the Baltic; others suppose that the springs have been partially dried up, and left the loftier parts of the shores bare.

Upsala was originally called Ostra Aras,

which name still survives in Westeras, the final syllable being pronounced "rose" in both. In the middle of the thirteenth century the See was removed to the new town, and the old church stripped of its ornaments, both Heathen and Christian. Like most buildings in Sweden, it has suffered much from fire ; three times it has been entirely destroyed by the flames. The present church is, with the exception of that at Lund, the finest in the country. It is a vast Gothic pile in brick, ornamented with two towers. The interior is plain, rather disfigured with whitewash, but contains some good monuments. Not a few of the latter bear evidence of the flames, but fortunately those of the most distinguished men have remained unhurt.

The first that the stranger's eye naturally looks for, is that of Linnæus. It is an upright one of variegated marble, with a medallion bearing his likeness. Beneath it a simple inscription has been placed, that suffices for one whose fame is universal. The other tombs bear

chiefly historical names. By the side of the high altar rest the bones of St. Eric, tutelary saint and king of Sweden, who was murdered in the eleventh century by a Danish prince. They were removed in 1273 to Upsala church, which was then of wood, and are preserved in an exquisite shrine of silver, in the form of a church.

The principal monument, however, is in the chapel behind the high altar, commonly called, in catholic churches, the Holy Virgin's chapel. It contains the remains of Gustaf Wasa. In the centre lies the marble effigy of the great king, on a sarcophagus, between his two first queens. He is represented in armour, with a flowing beard. The walls around have lately been painted in fresco by Professor Sandberg. The subjects have appropriately been selected from Gustaf's acts, before and after ascending the throne. The two principal pieces represent his triumphal entry into Stockholm, after the final expulsion of the Danes, and his last sitting in the Diet. The valedictory speech that he de-

livered on that occasion, is painted in letters of gold beneath.

The other pictures are on a smaller scale, and cover the space under the windows at the extremity of the chapel. There was one still unfinished when I was last there; the artist not being able to continue his labours in the winter. They comprehend the more eventful parts of his career: His introduction, by Baner, to the senators of Lubeck, from whom he implored assistance for his intended hostilities against the Danes. His flight into the Dalar, where he worked in the mines, disguised as a peasant. In this picture the young chief is painted in the costume of the Dahl people, standing by the door of a barn with a flail in his hand. A Danish spy, who has traced Gustaf to the neighbourhood, is questioning a "Dahlkulla," or girl, as they are called, from the cap they wear. The woman is trying to give her countryman time to escape, by engaging the attention of the spy. The anxiety she seems

to conceal with difficulty, is well contrasted with the searching glances of her questioner.

In the next picture, Gustaf has thrown off his incognito. He is haranguing the assembled Dalecarlians at the church of Mora. Still in the costume of the district, wrapped in the same coarse white coat, he is distinguished by his superior looks, and the animation that diffuses itself from his countenance into those of his listeners. It must have been a proud moment for him—prouder even than that of his triumph, when, from a solitary fugitive, he found himself surrounded by men hardy as the rocks upon which they were reared, and whose fidelity has never been sullied. Backed by such men, and embarked in a just cause, he could not doubt of being eventually successful.

The last picture records the adoption of the Swedish translation of the bible. Two Lutheran ministers are presenting a volume to the king, who is accompanied by his son, afterwards Eric the Fourteenth, of whom this cathedral

contains far different memorials. The effect of the pictures, which are all very animated, is in some measure hurt by the bright azure colour of the wall.

In different parts of the church, not appropriated to worship, various curiosities are kept. Among the most remarkable, and certainly the most ancient, is the northern idol, Thor, carved in wood. This statue formerly stood in the Heathen temple at Upsala the Elder; when the See was changed, Thor followed in the train. His wooden figure has suffered considerably since his deposition. His left shoulder has almost disappeared under the knives of virtuosi. At present, the "bearer of the hammer," raised aloft on a bracket, far out of the reach of sacrilegious hands, need no longer fear for the part of his person that remains after the lapse of two thousand years. The idol is the rude representation of the bust and trunk of an old man, rather less than the size of life.

The crowns and sceptres of John III. and his

Polish wife, which were buried with them, have been taken up; but I understand are to be restored to their tombs. The cruel murderer of his brother enjoys, next to his father Gustaf, the handsomest monument in the church; but there is something in the countenance of his statue, which was no doubt a good likeness, that is very revolting. With the golden crowns are also many jewelled chalices, and a box of gold for holding the indulgences that were sent for sale from Rome.

A dark dungeon-like room, approached by a narrow steep staircase, is crowded with copes and crosiers of prelates. A large whetstone, sent to Margaret, the Semiramis of the north, by Albrecht, when she threatened to invade his kingdom, with a recommendation to remain at home and sharpen her needles, exemplifies the folly of boasting; and he must have felt the absurdity of his insult sharply enough, when expelled from Sweden. Some ornaments and part of the dress of St. Bridget are also to be

seen ; but by far the most interesting remnants of antiquity are the clothes worn by the two Stures, who fell a sacrifice to Eric XIV.'s madness, for it can bear no other name, in the castle of Upsala. The story that relates to them is so striking that its interest will excuse its length.

The Stures were the most distinguished family in Sweden ; during the time of Christiern I. and II., they had governed Sweden with kingly power as administrators. Unfortunately their descendants, in an evil hour, became suspected by Eric, and, driven on by his evil advisers, he totally destroyed a family to which, next to his own, Sweden owes the greatest gratitude. The particulars of this tragic event I have taken from a short account in the Swedish language, which relates the facts without any comment whatever on the conduct of the king.

In the summer of 1567 Eric caused Count Suante Sture, Eric Sture, Sten Baner, and two other noblemen, to be thrown into prison in the castle of Upsala, on suspicion that they had

conspired with Nils Sture, the Count's son, then in Germany, to create a rebellion at Kalmar, and dethrone the king. Shortly after, Nils himself returned home and was immediately arrested, and, by order of Joran Pehrson, the king's evil genius, the documents that he had brought from abroad with him were taken from him, and he was locked up in the same castle as the others of his house.

One Saturday afternoon Eric, accompanied by his guards, walked from the town to the castle outside. He then ordered the door of Nils's dungeon to be thrown open, and, having entered, he called him a traitor and villain. Becoming excited, he with his own hand stabbed the prisoner in the breast with a dagger, which the other drew out himself, and having kissed it, bloody as it was, returned it to his assassin. The king did not allow himself to be softened by this submission, but rushed on his victim and despatched him with repeated blows. It seems that his fury was now over for the moment.

He ran to Count Sture's room, and, falling on his knees, begged forgiveness for his having put him into prison unjustly; he then went to each of the other prisoners, and assured them of his favour.

As he was leaving the castle and crossing the bridge, the Stathallare, Joran Pehrson's brother, and the bishop of Kalmar met him. Eric at once told them what had happened, and how he had just murdered Nils Sture. "Your majesty should have killed them all," remarked one of the new comers, "for this will never be pardoned by the survivors." The king said he thought it probably would be so. Then, turning round to the provost that followed him, "Go," said he, "and have them all despatched except Sten." Two guards were at once sent to murder the old man, who, when he heard his doom, only begged to be left to bleed on his bed. The other guards, however, finding repeated blows of a halbert too slow in their work, cut his throat with a sword.

In the mean time the same scene was being

acted with the others. Eric had desired Sten to be spared, but had not designated which, for there were two of that name confined, yet none dared question him, so Sten Baner was put to death, and Sten Ericson had a respite. Not a long one, however, for the following year he was killed by a soldier in the streets of Stockholm. Thus, in one hour, was the name of Sture, so illustrious in Sweden, blotted out for ever through the frenzy of a maniac.

Eric seems to have been instigated to the first outrage by anger, to the second by fear, a quality never attributed to any of his family. He was now quite overpowered by the demon in him. Turning from the town, he bent his way over the fields, towards the woods. Two persons, the one a Frenchman and the other a noble, named Dionysius, whom also he acquainted with what he had done, tried to persuade him to return and make some excuse to the people. They were not noticed ; but, as he found that Dionysius still followed him, he

seized a pike from a soldier to kill him. The other retreated as quickly as he could over a fence, and Eric desired one of his guards to pursue and despatch him. In the chase Dionysius was cut over the leg, which was nearly severed in two. Still he fled; till, falling, his antagonist came up and cut his throat. The body lay there for three days, when it was placed by the side of the others in the castle, all in their bloody garments.

Next day Eric came privately to Stockholm, and ordered that Sten Ericson and some others should be informed of the murder. He at the same time begged their friendship, and made them promise not to revenge, either by themselves or by the means of others, this untoward act. He also made them give a written assent to his marriage with Karin Mansdattir, and a recognition of her son, if she should ever have one, as heir to the Swedish crown. This lady was the daughter of a guardsman; she was yet a little girl, selling nuts at one of the gates of

the palace of Stockholm, when Eric saw her and was struck with her beauty ; he had her brought up with his sister, and when he found that neither Queen Elizabeth, nor the other princesses whom he asked in marriage, would listen to his proposals, he married her.

It is but justice to her to say, that no queen ever behaved better than she ; and that her influence over the gloomy character of her husband many a time diverted his fits of madness, and restored his serenity of mind. Her power over him was such, that, according to the custom of the middle ages, she was supposed to have gained her ascendancy through sorcery. Joran Pehrson took advantage of the belief, and tried to ruin her in the opinion of the king, but he was too well acquainted with her virtues to listen to the accusation of the wretch ; and Karin lived to be Eric's only consolation in the lowest depths of misfortune that a king can be plunged into.

When not under temporary derangement, Eric

appears to have been an amiable man. His talents were of the highest order; he was passionately fond of music, a good scholar and logician, and of his knowledge of painting there still remain many proofs; among others, his own portrait, by himself, at Gripsholm, sent with the offer of his hand to a German princess. I should hardly think that he had flattered himself; for the pictures by other painters give a more favourable notion of his face than his own handiwork. His beard approaches nearest to what Bottom, the weaver, would call straw-coloured. His crimes were great; but their deepest shades fade when placed by the side of his merciless brother John, who had not even madness to palliate his cruelty.

Eric being reconciled to the relatives of his victims, their bodies were buried in one grave; and, after the funeral oration, which was inaudible through the sobs of those present, a herald came forward, and read a letter from the king,

absolving the deceased from all disgrace, and attributing their death to his hastiness.

The clothes of the father and son are hung in a glass case, and exhibit numerous triangular holes. The person who accompanied me said, that each had received eight stabs. On their shirts there are dark patches round the punctures that mark where the blood flowed. In the hatband of the younger one there is still a glove fastened, as a favour from a lady. The castle, the scene of the above murder, is on a hill, opposite the church. It is insignificant in its present state, but the walls and arches in ruins around it exhibit great strength.

CHAPTER VII.

Departure from Stockholm—Party at Gefle—Dalerna
—Escape of Gustaf Wasa from Ornas—Falhun—The
copper-mine—Swedish paper, and copper money.

IN the middle of December, the winter that had been rather slow in coming, began to give signs that it had not altogether forgotten Sweden. Little snow had fallen, and, in the neighbourhood of the capital, sledging had not yet commenced. About this time an Englishman, Mr. D., arrived at Stockholm, from a tour he had taken to Tobolsk. Having accidentally

heard from a friend of mine, who had travelled with him from the west of Sweden, that he intended to take a journey through Lapland, I eagerly seized the opportunity of accompanying him. I found that the inquiries he had made as to the mode and proper time for crossing from Tornea to the Frozen Ocean, had elicited but very little information from the Swedes, and even what he had been told, we afterwards discovered was, in great measure, incorrect. Indeed, in Stockholm, and even several hundred miles north of it, nothing whatever was known about the country beyond Tornea. Occasionally persons travel as far as Tornea, to see the sun at twelve o'clock on Midsummer nights, but beyond that point, the country is a perfect *terra incognita*. Under such circumstances, it was by no means easy to decide when to start. My companion had been told that the end of February would be the best time for leaving Tornea, as at that time a market would be held there, and many of the merchants would return

to Finmark. Much diversity of opinion also prevailed as to the length of time required for crossing from the Gulf of Bothnia to the Frozen Ocean; some asserting that the journey could not be accomplished in less than a month, and others shortening the duration to eight days. At last we determined on starting at once, and meeting the snow on the way.

We accordingly left Stockholm one fine frosty morning, and in the afternoon found ourselves at Upsala. A couple of days were more than sufficient to see every thing worth examination in the university. Besides the cathedral and palace, the library is the only prominent object; and that, a mere stone building on the hill between the two former edifices, would make little figure, except in a wooden town built with the regular quadrangular uniformity that prevails in Sweden. The students, who amount, I was told, to about two thousand, though not exactly Oxonians in appearance, exhibit none of the extravagance of the Ger-

man universities, and, except for an occasional song hummed in the street, a stranger would never suspect that he was in the first university in Sweden. While remaining here, we heard that sledging had begun thirty miles to the northward, and we accordingly determined on leaving a little carriage of mine, in which we had come, and using the peasants' carts till we should meet with sufficient snow to change our conveyance. Unluckily a change of weather came on, attended with rain, and as our furs proved but bad protectors against drenching, and Mr. D. had an attack of asthma, we were obliged to stop the first day at a place called Yfre, scarce forty miles from Upsala. The post-house at this place happened to be the worst I met with in Sweden, and the good people seemed aware of it, for they expressed astonishment when they heard us determine on staying there the night. They, however, did every thing in their power to make us comfortable, and attempted to make up for other deficiencies

by enlivening us with their conversation. Notwithstanding all their endeavours, the place was so disagreeable and dirty, that we, the next day, determined rather to face the storm than remain there a second day.

In the evening we passed the falls of Elfkärby proceeding from the river Dahl, which runs into the Gulf of Bothnia, a little below them. They are amongst the finest in Sweden, and bear a remote resemblance in form, though not in size, to those of Niagara, owing to an island that divides them. A very light and bold bridge has been thrown across the rapids below, which separate Upland from Gästrikland. Another storm forced us to stop here, and spend the night in drying our drenched clothes, in a post-house very little better than the last. In most cases, the building reserved for the accommodation of strangers in inns is detached from that occupied by the family, and the greatest difficulty is found in calling the

attendant, as a bell is as yet unknown in a Swedish tavern.

A couple of chairs and a kind of sofa, contrived to be made into a most diminutive bed, is the extent of what one may expect in a place of the sort.

Our progress had as yet been so unsatisfactory, that we began to regret having left Stockholm so early in the season, when a strong north wind arose, and made the thermometer fall to eighteen degrees of cold (Reaumur). The scene at once changed; the asthma was forgotten, the rain turned to snow, and, with renovated spirits, we commenced sledging; and gliding through forests, that appeared the work of fairies, we entered Gefle.

This is the fourth town in Sweden, and contains above eight thousand inhabitants. It is a very busy place while the sea is open, and it is said to own more shipping than even Stockholm. The prosperity of its commerce is visi-

ble in its granite bridges and quays, and other public buildings. At the present time, most of its shipping was away; yet the monotony of the frozen river was broken by several large vessels lying in it. This port carries on considerable trade with England, and also with the Americans, whose style of ship-building they particularly affect to imitate.

A merchant, with whom I had travelled from Kiel to Copenhagen, had desired me to call on him, in case I passed through Gefle. He was the son of a clergyman in Lapland, and was born in Kallisovando, the most remote "pastorat" in Sweden. I was therefore glad to avail myself of his invitation, as he not only gave me much information respecting his own country, but provided me also with letters to several of his relatives, who fill both civil and ecclesiastical offices in that quarter.

In the evening he introduced my friend and myself to a party given by another merchant. The company consisted almost entirely of men;

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After this ceremony a general disposition to go away manifested itself, and thanks having been returned to the lady of the house, and exchanged between the guests for "got s lskap," or good company, the rooms were empty in a few minutes. It is also usual to say "tak for sist" (thanks for last time), the first time one meets a person after partaking of his hospitality.

The next morning we left Gefle and shaped our course to the westward, with the intention of seeing Falhun, the chief town of Dalecarlia. This province, called in Swedish "Dalerna," or the valleys, is more than twice the size of Yorkshire, and extends from the borders of G estrikland to Norway. It abounds in lakes and rivers, of which the Dahl Elf is the principal. Though the inhabitants yield to none of their countrymen in industry, the agricultural produce of the whole tract never meets the demand, and a large portion of the population are obliged to leave their homes for a part of the year and

seek employment elsewhere. The expense of carriage adds so much to the difficulty of procuring rye bread, that in the remote parts the peasants are almost every year obliged to mix the tender bark of pines with the meal to satisfy the cravings of hunger. In the northern part, called Elfdal, where distress is the most prevalent, the quarry of Blidberg, and other smaller ones, have caused the establishment of a factory for working porphyry. It has produced many splendid specimens of art, among which may be numbered the vase, placed behind the royal summer residence, called Rosendal in Djur Garden, but it is only at the king's expense, who is the proprietor of it and a considerable loser, that it is kept in activity.

Though the soil is bad, and the climate unfavourable to agriculture, game is abundant, and vast quantities of that fine bird the cock of the woods (tjæder), and black cock (orra) are exported to Stockholm during the autumn and winter. Round Falhun the mines give some

employment, and collect the people somewhat closer ; over the rest of the province they are dispersed in mere villages, not a town presenting itself between that place and Östersund. A vast extent is covered with forests and lakes, and the population of the whole does not amount to twelve to the square mile. Yet, though labouring under these disadvantages, there is no part of the Swedish nation who are so much looked up to by their countrymen as the Dalecarlians. Their honesty and frankness of character are proverbial, and their industry is sure to gain them a preference wherever they offer themselves for work. Mixing as they do with the people of the capital, it would not be wonderful if in the number a few were unable to resist temptation and get into trouble ; yet the exception is so very rare, that I was told in Stockholm as a singular fact, that, during the winter, a Delecarlian labourer had been committed to prison for theft.

After two days' journey over frozen lakes,

which considerably shortened the distance, we arrived at Falhun. The town is built between two lakes, over one of which we drove the last fourteen miles. Little or no snow had fallen as yet in the neighbourhood, and one stage was so bare that we were obliged to make use of carts. The town itself presents nothing worth notice; it is built of wood; the houses, all painted red, present a peculiar gloomy appearance, which was at the time increased by the darkness of the weather. We were told that the population amounted to between four and five thousand, which, for a Swedish town, is considered no mean figure; I doubt whether, during the three days we were there, we saw a hundred persons altogether.

At no great distance, near the lake Runn, is a house which has become remarkable from one of the events of Gustaf Wasa's life. The owner of Ornæs, at that period, was one Arendt Pehrson, whose name is infamous in Swedish history. After the massacre of the nobles in

Stockholm, Gustaf was obliged to fly and seek security in Dalecarlia, where the tyrant Christiern had not such power as over the rest of the country. Wandering about perfectly friendless, he imagined that the time was come when a blow might be struck, which would expel the oppressors of his country. A few brave men to assist him in putting his plans into execution, was all that seemed necessary. But where was he to turn to? He was himself proscribed, the country filled with spies, and such an awe had been struck into the minds of the people by the ferocity of Christiern, that for a time the Swedes seemed to have given up all hopes of recovering their liberty. He considered these difficulties, and, having come to the determination that every thing must be risked, he approached Ornoes and begged to be allowed a private interview with the owner. Pehrson, though he had been at the University of Upsala with Gustaf, was unable to recognise him in his disguise of a peasant. He at once observed

that his manners and dress did not agree, but could not recollect the face of the stranger. Gustaf declared himself, informed him of the murder of his father and brother-in-law, told him a price was put on his own head, and asked for his aid in saving his country. Pehrson pretended to approve of Gustaf's plans, begged of him to retire to rest, and said he would consider the matter. Far, however, was it from his intention to assist him; the price put upon his guest's head awakened at once his ambition and his avarice. He hurried off to his neighbour, Mans Nilsson, and discovered to him the prey that had fallen into his hands, the advantages he might derive from it, and the use he purposed to make of his good fortune. He happened, however, not to be the wretch that Pehrson took him for: he expressed his abhorrence at the intended breach of hospitality, and conjured him to think no more of such a damning act.

Brun Bengtsson, his wife's nephew, whom

he next consulted, was not so scrupulous; he agreed to accompany him with an armed force and assist in the capture of Gustaf. Fortunately for the deliverer of Sweden, these two men were vicious in more respects than one. Certain that their designs were not suspected, they spent the greater part of the night in carousing, and did not set out on their expedition till the morning. In the mean time the traitor's wife, Barbro Swinhufvud, had observed the eagerness of her husband to leave the house, and being well acquainted with his character, she suspected that he intended to take advantage of the defenceless state of the stranger. Though of a family devoted to the Danish interest, she took pity on him and determined to save Gustaf. By her order, a sledge was got ready and brought under the window of his room. She then discovered to him the risk he was incurring by remaining under her husband's roof, and advised him to shelter himself in the house of a priest whom she named, and whose probity


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and to heighten the interest which they must create in the breast of a Swede, several objects of little value, but which have belonged to Gustaf, such as a brass watch, gauntlets, a matchlock, drinking-cups, have been placed in it; some rude statues of himself and his Dalecarlian guards have been added, and not the least interesting object is the portrait of his fair preserver.

The chief object that drew us from the north road into Dalecarlia was the desire of my fellow-traveller to descend into the great mine of Falhun. I had myself, some four years before, been over the interior, and therefore had no other inducement to revisit its damp and sulphureous recesses than to accompany my countryman, whose ignorance of the language would have made a solitary descent tedious and unsatisfactory. When we came to the mouth, we discovered that it would be necessary to descend by the staircases and ladders, as owing to the Christmas holydays sufficient ore was not ob-



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Unlike other mines, the mouth of that at Falhun is an immense abyss, called Stötten, at the bottom of which the opening of the shaft begins. This vast chasm is about forty fathoms deep, and one hundred in diameter. It was made by an awful falling in, which happened in 1687, when, owing to some neglect in springing a mine, the support of three different shafts gave way and left the present gap, which would suggest no bad idea of the entrance of the infernal regions. The unskilful manner in which the mine had been worked in remote ages, and the little support that had been left for the weight above, had always made an accident of the kind a probable event. Shortly before it happened, certain symptoms understood by experienced miners, had given notice that the crisis was near at hand, and the chief director of the works had ordered the excavation to be suspended. This cessation from work naturally

involved a suspension of wages, which the miners could but ill afford; and, accordingly, after two or three days had passed without accident, they determined to resume their occupations. The director still persisted in his refusal; the Dalecarlians, nothing daunted, broke into open mutiny, and assembled near the spot with their tools in their hands, determined to return to the mine. Fortunately, while preparing to do so, and before any of them had descended, the catastrophe took place, and showed how just were the predictions of their chief.

A few years ago, a recurrence of the same accident was expected, and the miners were summoned to leave the interior. Those of the present day appear to be as obstinate as their predecessors, for nothing less than smoking them out succeeded in dislodging them from their stronghold.

Four wooden staircases, built of the trunks of fir-trees, and projecting beyond the sides of

the chasm, admit of an easy but somewhat slippery descent. Before leaving the upper regions, the man who was to accompany me, provided himself with a quantity of thin laths, made of very resinous pine. These he turned into torches by confining a dozen together with rings. One of these being lighted, and two or three others taken as a reserve, we entered a small room that led to one of the descents. A continual dripping from the rocks above causes a pattering on the floor which is increased by numerous echoes. Half-way down two large halls have been excavated, in one of which Gustaf III. has left his autograph, and the date 1788 written in chalk and since cut out in the rock. On approaching the part where the people are at work, a curious effect is produced by the sound of their voices while singing. The men themselves are not visible, and the voices appear to proceed from the heaps of burning wood which serve to give them light,

and which the distance reduces to the size of stars. The dismal cry of the miner before he fires the train, re-echoed along the vaults till the last faint sound is drowned in the report of the explosion, makes also a most singular impression on those unaccustomed to dive below the surface of the earth.

Long before I had remained a sufficient time to see the machinery for raising the water and the different parts where the works were going on, my clothes were become uncomfortably wet by the fall of the impregnated water, and I gladly returned by the bucket. Five other men, whose duties led them to revisit the light, took advantage of the same conveyance. Throwing one leg into the tub, and leaving the other to dangle outside, they held on unconcernedly by the hand, singing a stave and waving their pine torches to keep them alight. After rising a while, the fires of the miners below became invisible, and nothing could be seen but the

projecting points of the shaft, which seemed to threaten destruction to our overladen bark. Gradually a little star above us increased into a circle of light, and after taking about five minutes and a half in the return, we found ourselves in the open air.

This ancient mine has been in former ages very productive ; during the last three centuries, a material decline has annually exhibited itself in its returns. During Gustaf Adolph the Great's reign, it yielded yearly about 2400 tons of copper ; since that time it has gradually decreased till the present moment, when it has been reduced to little more than a quarter of that quantity. All the copper money used in the country is coined in Dalecarlia, and, till lately, it was the only metallic currency in general use.

Within the last six or seven years, a new silver coinage has been issued ; but it is rarely met with except in the capital. The peasants,

accustomed to the ancient coarse paper notes, have not yet become sufficiently acquainted with the new pieces not to look upon them with distrust, and almost universally request to be paid in paper. The larger notes have also been improved of later years, but the small notes, from threepence to sixpence in value, are still printed on the same vile material. In remote provinces, where the people have but little communication with the Swedish National Bank, one generally receives in change the most filthy pieces of rag, connected together by pins, and so worn out as to be perfectly illegible. Each note very considerably announces at its foot that the imitator of it shall be hanged—a mode of punishment inflicted in Sweden only on forgery; all other capital crimes are visited with decapitation. The difficulties that the finances of the Swedes have fallen into, have at different times obliged them to have recourse to the baser metals in lieu of gold and silver. Charles XII.'s reign exhausted the

specie of the country, and a small coin, worth a runstek, or eighth of a farthing, was for a time raised to the nominal value of a silver dollar, four and sixpence, but, after a while, the coin fell to its real worth. Adolph Frederik found himself in similar difficulties, and issued tokens which remind one of the money in use among the Spartans. Dollars and half-dollars were coined in the form of a square, half an inch thick. A half dollar piece that I bought at Stockholm, is four inches square, and weighs half a pound. The four corners are stamped with the kings initials, and the value in silver is marked in the middle. The reverse is quite plain. These pieces are no longer in circulation, but are still occasionally to be picked up as curiosities.

Falhun, though not presenting a very lively exterior while we remained there, was not altogether devoid of public entertainments. A Norwegian company were in possession of the

theatre, and amused the Swedes with a mixture of their own and the audience's languages. The two tongues do not so far differ as to make a dialogue between these two people unintelligible; yet words, very proper in the one, are often ridiculous and even highly offensive in the other. A principal feature in the Swedish language is the use of the third person, and the constant repetition of the character or title of the person addressed. In Norway, on the contrary, there is not so much attention paid to outward form, and the word "di," which answers to our "you," is substituted. In Dalecarlia, the second person singular is almost universally made use of, and the word "ni," which answers to the Norwegian "di," is a term of contempt.

An attempt was now made by us to cross to Östersund over the lakes. This way is made much use of in winter, by traders, and is far shorter than by Sundsvall. After every inquiry,

we found that no one in the town could give a march route, and we were obliged to turn towards Södrehamn, where we should again fall into the great north road.

CHAP

Norrland—Change in the
sledge—Angermanland—
A funeral procession—Ly
ing the Gulf on the ice—

A FEW miles south of
the province of Norrland
leaving the capital the
peasantry improve as
the north, and we have

were fully equal if not superior to those in the south. It was easy, however, to see that they owed these advantages to industry; not a house that we entered but re-echoed with spinning-wheels and looms. Both in Helsingland and Angermanland the population employs much of its time in weaving linen cloths, some of which are tolerably fine. This, of course improves their circumstances materially, though from the prices at which their manufactures are sold, they must work early and late to derive much advantage from it.

They have in this part of Sweden a mode of drying their crops, not adopted, I believe, elsewhere. A frame, in the form of a colossal gate, furnished with numerous bars, and towering far above the tops of their houses, is attached to each farm. Upon this rack, the corn or flax is extended and wind-dried far more expeditiously than if subjected to the uncertain heat of the sun. In the interior also of the houses greater neatness and cleanliness are observable than in

other parts of the country, and some luxury is exhibited in the number of apartments into which each dwelling is divided.

Södrehamn, like most of the other wooden towns of Sweden, has suffered much from fire. The whole of the damage produced by the last occurrence of the kind has not yet been repaired, and a large space is still left bare in the middle of the town. On the whole, it is rather prettily situated, being overhung with craggy heights towards the sea; the shipping cannot come nearer than a mile and a half from it.

Little more can be said of Hudiksvall, the next place that follows, a town of the same calibre, with a couple of thousand inhabitants. Formerly, it was farther inland, but the retiring of the gulf of Bothnia had, in 1622, rendered Hudiksvall so inconveniently distant from the shore that Gustaf Adolph caused the town to be removed to its present situation. The same phenomenon is apparent along the whole western coast of the gulf. Old Lulea was also

once a seaport-town ; now it is three miles from the sea ; and Tornea, which was formerly an island, is now a peninsula. It has not yet been settled whether this is owing to the surface of the gulf gradually lowering, or to a rise in the whole of Sweden. Celsius, the inventor of the centigrade thermometer, leaned to the latter opinion, and, from information derived on the coast, was led to suppose that the amount of the rise was about forty-five inches in a century.

At Iggesund, near Hudiksvall, we had a specimen of the hardihood of the peasantry. Coming in the middle of the night to the post-house, we met with some delay on account of the peasants, whose business it was to wait at the station, having taken themselves off, and wisely gone to bed. After half an hour's detention we began to show signs of impatience, and the girl of the inn, probably expecting to be blamed for the negligence of the men, ran out to fetch them, barefooted as she was, and with the rest of her person little better protected. The cold was

sufficiently keen to make itself uncomfortably felt through a fur pelisse, yet the damsel returned, after a scamper of half a mile over the snow without any symptoms of distress.

The sledges we met on the road proceeding to Stockholm were chiefly loaded with frozen game; woodgrouse, ptarmigans, and black game, are sent down in vast quantities to Stockholm as soon as the winter is sufficiently advanced to admit of their being packed up in a frozen state. The earliest come from Dalecarlia and the neighbouring country; later, the supply comes from Norrland and Jemtland. When I returned to Stockholm, in February, I found the game had disappeared south of Pitea, in the vicinity of which I met with large flights of grouse.

At Hudiksvall, I procured, at the small cost of thirty-six shillings, a kind of sledge, that I had been looking out for during the whole journey, and which I recommend to those who travel so far to the north. It is that in general

use in Finland, and is as convenient as the most luxurious carriage. Being narrow, it is not suited for more than one person, but is sufficiently long to admit of his lying in it at full length, and using it as a bed, if he be not inclined to try the comforts of the post-houses. The driver sits on the fore part, which is boarded over, and forms a box large enough to contain a moderate quantity of luggage. Throughout the north of Sweden, the form of the sledge varies every hundred miles, and the shape adopted in one part is unsuited to the style of country in another, but the Finnish sledge answers for hill or plain, and is rarely stopped by any depth of snow.

There was little to detain us in Sundsvall or Hernösand, though both are larger than the last places we had left. As my companion preferred moving along slower, I left him here, to meet me later at Tornea, and proceeded alone through Angermanland and West Bothnia.

Immediately after crossing the Angerman

river, which is about two miles wide in this part, I entered a very hilly country. It has been considered by many travellers that the scenery of this part of Sweden yields, in summer, to few in Europe. Hills clothed with wood succeed hills in rapid succession, and in the intervals between them the descents are most precipitous. Some mountain-stream generally gives occasion for a rude wooden bridge to be thrown across the valley, which gives no great notion of security. Across these we dashed through the snow, with a rapidity that, in summer, on wheels, would have been most dangerous.

The sledge bounded down the oblique road, receiving shocks that threatened to make it fly to pieces at every minute. Every turn brought a change of scenery, and, as I advanced to Afwa, the sea was visible, as yet unfrozen. The autumn had been unusually fine, and the cold weather, as I heard from the peasants who drove me, had come on far later than is usual.

During the night I entered West Bothnia, and through the whole extent of it to Tornea, met with scarcely a rise. It is a narrow strip of land that borders the gulf on the west as far as Tornea. Those vast and elevated regions between it and the boundary of Norway, are wholly uncultivated ; they are the deserts in which the Laplanders of Asele, Umea, and Pitea, wander with their reindeer. Here, neither towns nor villages are to be met with ; the soil is unfit for cultivation ; swamps and rocks cover the surface, and as the traveller moves farther west, he meets those lofty mountains where vegetation ceases, and every vestige of animated nature having disappeared, the awful silence that reigns is only broken by the roar of the storm. Here rise those rapid rivers that give the names to the different Lapmarks and the Ranea and Kalix. These mountain torrents dash with mad rapidity down cataracts, that far surpass any other rivers in Europe, those of Norway ex-

cepted; the Lulea, in particular, is noted as being the most rapid stream in Scandinavia. In a few places on the confines of West Bothnia, some Finlanders are to be met with, little changed by their long sojourn in Sweden. The inhabitants, however, of West Bothnia are industrious, and not inferior to their southern neighbours in activity. The climate is certainly not favourable to agriculture; yet, though little grain is produced, the pastures are excellent, and enable the peasant to support a large quan-

birch-wood, that is carried down the great rivers, and shipped in the numerous little harbours that are to be found above the Quarken.

In Umea a sad falling off is visible from Sundsvall; it is apparent that one is approaching Lapland. The whole town has a gloomy appearance, and the buildings exhibit a corresponding dinginess of colour. On the river there were building three or four small vessels; the principal trade of the place is with the capital and other large towns south of it, but a few Norwegian ships also come here.

Another dreary journey of more than a hundred and seventy miles intervenes between this town and Pitea. In the midst of these wilds, where the sight of a wooden hut even is gratifying, the eye is suddenly delighted with the view of a beautiful building. It is difficult to explain the sensation produced by the church of Sunnana, after the eye has rested for days on the unvarying fir-trees and snow. A large white stone building, with four fronts orna-

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Some fifty miles west of Umea, a fair is held at Lyksele, where Laplanders, Swedes, and Norwegians from the western side of the mountains, meet in great numbers. A brisk trade is carried on throughout West Bothnia in furs, particularly fox-skins which fetch high prices in Russia; an ordinary one costs from twelve to thirteen shillings, and some in Tornea are valued as high as a hundred roubles, if very dark. They are all much larger than the English fox, and naturally have a much thicker fur. As I approached the northern extremity of the Gulf, I rarely drove a stage without being asked to trade in furs by the masters of post-houses and peasants. None but red ones were offered me, though the blue, or rather iron-grey, and the white varieties are to be met with.

Bears are to be found in this quarter, but on the whole are not so destructive as they are generally supposed. In fact one large Bruin in a neighbourhood is not considered much

of a nuisance. A gentleman who lived some time at Lulea, informed me that while there, a very large one took up his quarters in the district, and was never molested by the peasants, who declared that he kept others of his species away, and that it was far better to be subject to one great marauder, whose appetite could be easily appeased, than to numberless smaller ones whose incursions would be daily felt. Accordingly, by a compact made among the farmers, the loss of each from this bear was made up by the rest. My informant one day met Bruin on the road, and giving him the path passed on one side of him without receiving any more notice than a deep growl, unattended with any symptom of hostility.

All bears, however, are not such favourites as this fortunate one; they are too troublesome to the peasantry, carrying off horses and bullocks, to be long left in peace themselves where once they make their unwelcome presence known in a neighbourhood. A peasant ge-

nerally goes out in search of his trail, and having found it, moves in a ring some miles in circumference to make sure of having him within it. He then gradually contracts his circles till he comes to the retreat itself of the animal. Weeks are sometimes expended in this search; the peasantry are then summoned to a Skall by the Landshöfving, or governor of the province, and put under the direction of the Jagtmøestare, or ranger of the district, who marshals them and commands their movements. The peasants are generally formed into circles, and come armed with whatever weapons they can procure.

Though opposed singly to a whole host, the bear often spreads havoc among his assailants. Every ball that enters his huge carcass but adds fire to his fury; and woe to the individual whom his wrath has singled out! It ceases to be a mere pastime, and nothing but the greatest self-possession can save him from a miserable death. While at Hernosand I saw a represen-

table of an event that took place at a Skall in the neighbourhood in 1831, and which shows that bear-hunting must be quite equal to tiger-hunting in excitement and peril. The bear on this occasion was very large; nothing like an American bear with which an Indian can grapple, but an enormous beast able to carry off a pony under his arm. His temper, probably never very good, had been ruffled by ten shots lodged in different parts of his body; all present retrenched themselves and awaited some desperate effort on his part, should not a lucky shot through the head speedily give him his quietus. At this moment, a man bolder than his companions advancing before them, the bear rushed upon him, tore his gun from his hands, and began to wound him with his tremendous claws. The wretched man was unable to contend with his muscular antagonist; already his wounds were letting out his life, when a young Norrlander, unable to look quietly on, rushed to his assistance. Besides the danger

which he himself incurred, and which of course he had no feeling of, there was some difficulty in shooting the bear without striking the man. As he advanced, the bear rose on his hind legs to meet his new opponent; his victim dropped before him; the Norrlander seized the favourable opportunity, raised his gun with both arms high above his head, to bring it in a horizontal position on a level with the bear's, and, trusting to feeling more than sight, discharged his piece. An immediate death-wound could alone save either from their enemy. The success, which the brave man deserved, attended him, and the ball passed through the brain of the bear which fell dead on the rescued man.

The spoils of so formidable an enemy, one would suppose, would be used to protect the person of the victor against the severity of the climate; I however never met with any put to that use in Sweden. The peasants in Norrland satisfy themselves with the humbler skins of a species of dogs which they breed chiefly, it

seems, for that purpose. When the pelisse is made of black or dark brown ones, it is handsome enough, though I have heard of such a thing as the wearer being mistaken for a bear at a skull, and shot dead. It has always struck me as unfeeling to keep this most amiable of animals merely with a prospect of stripping him of his skin; and when the faithful companion comes to fondle his master, to pat him, not with a feeling of gratitude, but with a forethought how comfortable his sleek coat will be when winter comes on, and the friend who now looks with kindness on you shall have been slaughtered. It is bad enough to see in Spain the children decking the lambs which follow them with ribbons and flowers, and a few weeks afterwards making a meal of their dear playmate, when their attention has made him a desirable addition to the dinner-table. I was not therefore sorry, as I approached Piteä, to lose sight of the dog's-skin pelisses, and see them replaced by calves'-skins, which are universally

worn till one enters the region of reindeer, which in turn adorns the persons of the North Bothnians. The higher classes, when travelling, generally wear wolves'-skins, which are above the reach of the peasants, their cost amounting to about five pounds.

When the winter has fully set in, and the weather has continued moderately still for some time, the crossing of the Gulf over the ice at Umea is a matter of common occurrence. The nearest mainland on the opposite shore is somewhere near Jacobstad, but as small rocky islands extend in a south-easterly direction, it is usual to shape one's course for Wasa, and in that way avoid as much as possible the open part of the Gulf. The whole distance is about eighty miles, and the first half of the journey is that in which the greatest risk is incurred. A sudden change of wind may part the ice and leave the travellers in a most dangerous position, without shelter, and liable to be drifted away. This part of the journey must,

consequently, be hurried over, and little rest is allowed the horses till they come among the "Säner," or islets, where there is no danger of the ice being dislodged. In winter the letters from Stockholm to Finland are carried from Gräsiehamn to the isle of Åland in sailing boats, and then conveyed in sledges among the islands, or rather rocks, that connect it with the coast near Åbo. Last year, from the hardness of the weather, the mails were conveyed the whole way by horses for more than a month's time.

The last town on the north-road is Piteå, the chief, or rather only town of the "län," or province, built at the mouth of the river, which also designates one of the "Lapmarks." At the last stage before coming to it I observed a man in fetters, walking alone near the post-house; his keeper was too busy warming himself near the fire to look after him, and I must say, the culprit showed no inclination to escape. Neither he, nor his guardian, would have troubled me

much, had I not found that as one peasant sufficed to bring back the horses of both sledges, I was obliged to keep company with this worthy for fourteen miles. Though he was to lodge that night in a prison, and prisons in his country are not as commodious as in England, he was marvellously in a hurry to attain his journey's end, and complained of our speed, which, nevertheless, was very tolerable; I suspect that the iron about his ancles was not particularly comfortable in the cold air.

The road passes through Old Lulea, which has long ceased to be a seaport; a new town, built close to the shore, has now usurped its trade, and left it a miserable village. Its size, if not its importance, is increased by a long street of square ground-floor houses, belonging to farmers in the neighbourhood, used as boxes for their horses and themselves, when they come to church. The same sort of buildings are to be occasionally seen in the north of Sweden, but not to such extent till the scantiness of the

population obliges the peasants to come from distant quarters to divine worship.

As I was passing through a forest, between that place and the little hamlet of Ranby, the driver pointed out to me the scene of a murder, an event rare enough in Sweden to attach an interest to a place long after the circumstance would be forgotten in more southern climates. In the north, the traveller has little to dread from the attacks of the highwayman. If he leaves a bottle of brandy in his sledge, I would not answer for its sanctity not being invaded, and even his whip might be thrown away, rather out of love for the peasant's horse, than to acquire it himself; but few attempts will be made upon his person or purse. Nothing, indeed, would be easier than to commit acts of violence; the forests that extend far to the west would throw too sure a veil over any deed of iniquity, and the wolves and other wild beasts that infest the woods, would soon destroy every vestige of the victim. Yet such cases occur rarely; I may

say, with one or two exceptions, they have never been heard of. On my journey I slept as securely in my sledge, while passing through the forests, as if I had been in a well-barred house, protected by all the police of London. When you have defended yourself against the rigour of the climate, you require little protection against your fellow-men.

The circumstance which was now related to me, had not occurred more than five years back.

A traveller, while waiting at the posthouse for horses, imprudently exhibited a large bundle of notes. At that time paper of every denomination was equally rude, and the size of his pocket-book impressed every one present with an idea that it contained a large sum. This, however, was erroneous, and the notes were afterwards found to be of little value. The quantity excited the avarice of the peasant, who was to follow him to the next stage. In many of the sledges the man who has to take back the horses stands on the runners behind the traveller, if the latter chooses

to give himself the trouble of driving. The peasant had observed him arrive, and marked that he would be put in this favourable position, and before starting took a hatchet with him, which excited no suspicion at the time. When they had arrived halfway, and were some miles from the nearest house, the peasant struck the man on the back of the head, and soon despatched him. Before, however, he had time to possess himself of the money that had urged him to the deed, he was disturbed by a slight

and seeking in death for that peace which he will have little chance of enjoying as long as he remains obstinate. Some have had perseverance enough to hold out two or three years, yet such instances are rare. In the case of the present murderer, there was no repugnance at owning the fact. In consequence of this custom, criminals in Sweden never exhibit, at the place of execution, those signs of hardness which often excite the sympathy of the mob, and are by them mistaken for innocence. Generally they walk fearlessly to the spot, accompanied by some friend, and give way to neither extreme of pusillanimity nor indifference.

When an execution is to take place in the country, notice is given in the parish church that a certain number of peasants are to find themselves at the appointed place with staves; these serve to form a ring, each man taking hold of the end of his neighbour's stick. A log is then cut down, and the prisoner having laid himself at full length, with his neck across it,

his head is cut off with an axe, his right hand having been, in general, previously cut off. After decapitation, the body, the right hand, and the head of the criminal, are exposed on stakes, the trunk being thrown on a cart-wheel, elevated on the middle post, and the remains are left there to decay. The bodies of female criminals are laid on a board, under which a fire is made, and are thus consumed. In latter years, I believe, this more decent course has been adopted in the case of both sexes.

At Ranby I found a small wooden church, of most rude exterior; it was, however, well filled, as all places of worship are in Sweden on Sunday. When the service was over, I met a Norwegian, a native of Hammerfest; he was come to attend a fair that had just taken place in the village, and offered, if I would wait a few days at Tornea, to accompany me through Lapland on his way home. He was, however, so uncertain of the time when he would be able to start, that I was obliged to forego the advan-

tage of his company, and satisfy myself with his instructions relative to the mode of travelling, and different remarks concerning particular places on the way.

I was now not more than seventy miles from Tornea ;* since leaving Pitea I had marked a great increase in the cold ; in driving along the Kalix river, it became almost intolerable. In addition, I had a narrow escape of being sunk, sledge and all, in an air-hole in the ice, which was not visible a few yards off. Yet these little incidents were not without relieving the monotony of a journey which, when I entered Haparanda, had extended over eight hundred miles, and passed through only seven towns.

* The final *a* of Tornea, Umea, Pitea, Skelleftea, &c., is pronounced *o*, and signifies river.

CHAPTER IX.

Happaranda — Tornea — Cossacks — Avasaxa on Midsummer's night — Summer travelling in North Bothnia — Rigour of the climate — Gellivara — Reappearance of the sun—A Lapland family.

It was dark and stormy when I turned into the court of the inn of Happaranda. Our progress along the Kalix river, with the wind ahead, had made great havoc with my face; as for the horse and sledge it was impossible to guess at their original colour with any certainty; both were clothed in a thick cover of rime, and

about the horses' nostrils hung icicles not far from a foot in length. So far circumstances agreed with the idea I had formed of Tornea in winter; thirty-six degrees of cold, according to Celsius's scale, was what might be reasonably expected on the verge of the Arctic circle. I was, however, agreeably disappointed on being shown into a very comfortable clean room. A very good-looking girl, whose drawling Kalix dialect was any thing but easy to comprehend, hastened to fetch me some coffee, an article which one always finds good even in the poorest post-houses in Sweden, and which is far better than tea when hunger, cold, and fatigue combine to exhaust the frame. The latter may be more refreshing when a journey of a day or two, with all appliances, is to be undertaken, but when an open sledge is to be one's bed, and after a breakfast of black rye bread, baked six months before, there is a probability of not getting a better dinner, a cup of coffee is a real luxury.

It is generally recommended to travellers to carry a supply of provisions, and thus be independent of the inns, which in the way of eating are miserably provided. But that even this precaution will be of little use, we had an opportunity of seeing at the beginning of our journey. At Gefle, we bought some capercali ready dressed; when we began to cut them up, some six hours afterwards, they were so frozen that it was impossible to eat them. Happening to be delayed at a place called Uppbo, I thrust one of the birds into the stove and left it there for half-an-hour, at the end of which time I found the impression of the heat was little more than skin deep, so that, after carrying this useless food for several days, we got so tired of being tantalized with it, that we threw them to some dogs.

The little town of Happaranda owes its origin to the cession of Tornea to the Russians at the end of the war. The latter is built on a peninsula, formerly an island in the river of the same name, and followed the fate of the part

of Finland lying on the eastern bank. Having lost this their most northern town, the Swedes determined on building a new one on their side. As yet, there are but few houses, and the place cannot lay claim to the rank of more than a köpping, or trading place, but it bids fair, with time, to surpass Tornea in size, as it has already in goodness of building.

The trade, also, is of more importance on the Swedish side of the river than on the Russian, and the merchants on the former are of more consequence. The harbour is a few miles below, near the mouth. The navigation of the Gulf of Bothnia, at its northern extremity, is very difficult, and this is of great disadvantage to the town, as it prevents steamers coming often to it. Last year one made a trip there in the summer, and I have heard that a regular boat is intended to run to it this season from Stockholm. Should this speculation be persevered in, a trip to see the Arctic sun at midnight will be of no

more difficulty than one to see the buoy at the Nore.

As the day advanced, I determined on availing myself of the short time that the sun remained above the horizon, to go over to Tornea. It is a rather back-door way of entering the Russian empire, and not one which gives a stranger the highest notion of its military power. In Happaranda no soldiers whatever were to be seen; those belonging to the regiment of the province had not exactly turned their swords into ploughshares, for there would have been nothing for them but snow to plough, but they were turned into peasants, and would remain in that state till the returning summer would bring back the season for drilling. I had heard that Tornea was in a better state of defence; that it was garrisoned with Cossacks. I was further told of the numberless crosses that covered the commanding officer of this important position.

Eager to see again the long beards of these

half-wild troops, of which I had a very indistinct recollection, I asked the way to Tornea, and was pointed out an avenue of young fir-trees planted in the ice, and forming a good track over the river. It is scarcely half a mile wide in this part, and, after making some leeway in my progress, for the wind was very high, I came to the opposite bank. I expected here to be subjected to the examination which takes place on every other part of the Russian frontier, but nothing in the shape of soldier or custom-house officer, or, indeed, living being, presented itself. A sentry box, I was going to say empty, but there I would be incorrect, for it was choked up with snow, was the only thing on duty here, and a high barrier of drift was the only bar to my entrance. Having surmounted that, I at once found myself as certainly in the dominions of the Emperor as if I was wending my way to Tobolsk under the escort of a keeper, with a recommendation to the governor of that province.

Turning up what appeared to me the principal street,—for as yet I had met but one individual, and he, upon my addressing him in Swedish, made a sign that he did not understand me—a gay-looking building, painted green and white, drew my attention from the uniformly mean houses on both sides. Four or five bells were hung in a row, not on the summit but on one side of it. This was the Russian church used for the troops; the Finlanders are Lutherans, and have their own church. More sentry boxes, equally untenanted, were planted here and there; Jack Frost seemed to have gained as complete a victory over the Cossacks as he did formerly, when he allied himself to them and expelled Napoleon from Russia. A few Finlanders, in their kybikes,* and wrapped up in their fur pelisses, galloped by, and, as the tinkling of their bells died away, seemed to leave the place more deserted than ever.

* A kind of light sledge used in Finland.

A little further on, I came to the "Gæstgîfvaregard" of the town. On one side of the gateway I observed a post, on which was painted in large letters, "To St. Petersburg, 1735 wersts." This was the first mark I saw of the change that Tornea had undergone by the fortune of war; its distance was now calculated from a new centre. As yet, little change has been made in the laws, as was agreed by the treaty of cession; but who can answer for its being observed when the performance of it depends solely on the will of one man, who has deprived his subjects of the power to resist his commands. Is there much reliance to be placed in a man who, in the plenitude of his power, lately issued an ukase, forbidding all persons under a certain age to wear spectacles? Already the Emperor has made an alteration in Finland; it is but trifling, some will call it nominal, but the people, who feel that it is the first step towards assimilating their country to the rest of the Russian empire, cannot look upon it but with

distrust. While under the Swedish crown Finland was divided into *Læns*, over which officers, called *Landshöfvdingar*, or the heads of the land, presided ; latterly the Autocrat had taken a dislike to that Swedish title, and substituted the more Russian one of Governor and Government.

The next day the young Norwegian, whom I had left at Ranby, came to Happaranda, and we drove over together to Tornea. The peasant that went with us was a Finlander, and wore the handsome cap peculiar to that nation. It is a cloth or velvet skull-cap surrounded by fur, much after the manner of the tiara of the Russian women. They also wear a particular kind of boots, called *komager*, the feet of which are made of one entire piece, and the leg that reaches up to the knee of another. As the soles are not harder than what would be the upper leather with us, they are much better suited for walking on the snow and keeping the feet warm than the common sort of boots ; the same kind are worn by the Habitants of Lower Canada.

We first drove to the apothecary, that generally great man in little towns. The shop was well fitted up, and displayed an assortment of jars and bottles that would not have disgraced a chemist in a country-town in England. That it is a far more profitable trade than with us, must be clear, from its being a sort of monopoly—very few towns in Sweden having more than one. The assistant, perceiving that we were strangers, mentioned it to his principal, who invited us into his house, and insisted upon our taking some wine and, what is a rarity at Tornea, some apples. He then conducted us to the barracks.

There were not more than thirty-two Cossacks and two officers stationed in the town, and, strange to say, this place is considered a very desirable post to be quartered in. The men have little to do in summer but to amuse themselves by fishing in the river, and winning the hearts of the Finland girls. There was a hint also given me, that the sale of the horse's forage made the pay rather better than elsewhere.

Each man could make a hundred roubles a year, which must be vast wealth in the eyes of a Russian soldier, and at the end of their five years' servitude, many of them that had come in rags returned tolerably well appointed.

We entered the barrack-yard, which displayed nothing of a military cast but the mustaches of some twenty men, of every height, from five feet four to six feet two, with high cheekbones, and wrapped up in sheepskin pelisses down to the knees. Some sharp bargaining was going on between the soldiers and a Finlander, who had brought a horse, for which he asked about seven guineas. It was easy to see that he had come to the wrong market, and, after more than one of the Cossacks had mounted and driven the horse round the yard with the help of that most persuasive instrument, the "nitraika," the peasant turned sulkily away, to look for some less difficult customer.

They civilly showed us the stables, and pointed out two of their horses as coming from

the Don. They were the two that had the ugliest heads of the whole lot, a quality in which they perfectly resembled their owners. Not more than one or two men were in uniform, which was merely a short blue jacket and wide trousers of the same colour, with a stripe down the side. Besides their sword, musket, pistols, and lance, the "nitraika," or whip, is no mean weapon. It might not unaptly be called a flail, and is as often applied to their enemy's person as their own horse. The thong, of plaited leather, is of the same length and thickness as the stick, and it does not yield much to it in stiffness. It is secured by a loop to the wrist, and, when wielded by an experienced hand, might, without much difficulty, break a man's arm.

The Norwegian introduced me to a gentleman at the head of the iron-works at Kœngis, about a hundred miles up the river Tornea. As Swedish is no longer spoken north of Happaranda, he recommended me to take the opportunity of the inspector's return to the north, and it was

accordingly settled that we should start together. Mr. Bergmark was accompanied by his wife and sister, who both travelled in an open sledge, notwithstanding the severity of the weather. Covered ones are not much used here; their greater weight, where the track admits of only one horse, renders them inconvenient for a long journey. It was a beautiful evening when we left Happaranda, and the moon shone delightfully over the river, making the night little darker than what was called day. After changing horses twice, we drove to a clergyman's house with whom Mr. B— was acquainted, and were regaled with an excellent supper. In the family was a young Magister, from the University of Upsala, who was most entertaining, and our host, who had for some years held a living in the heart of Tornea Lapmark, gave me much information as to my future mode of proceeding. In such pleasant company the time fled quickly, and it was past two in the morning before we were again in our

sledges, driving along at a rate which the good pastor's punch had no doubt accelerated.

Early in the morning we came to the village of Ofvre Tornea, or, rather, as the part built on the Swedish side is called, Matarengi. This spot has obtained some fame from being the first place where the sun is seen at midnight at midsummer, and here, as the road ends, is the general limit of travellers' journeys to the north. Most years, upon that occasion, men from many of the nations in Europe meet on a hill, not far from the village, called Avasaxa, and watch the sun touch the horizon and rise again. As may be supposed, Englishmen are not the rarest there, and many amusing anecdotes have been told me of their proceedings. A Swede, who held an office in the district of Lulea, and, therefore, had often been present on the spot, told me of one who came galloping up a quarter of an hour before the time. My informant having been in England, and speaking English, invited him to join his party, who were going to

have a collation, but our countryman was in too great a hurry for such diversions, and excused himself. He, at the same time, ordered his servant to bring out a bottle of champagne that had been shaken the whole way from St. Petersburg, and waiting till the critical moment, when the sun was, if we may use the expression, both setting and rising, tossed off a bumper, sprang into his carriage, and returned without more delay to the place whence he came.

Another individual was not so lucky. Twice he arrived at the place the day after the time. Yet, if he was slow, he cannot be accused of want of perseverance; a third time he went over the same long journey, and, by an exertion of all his energies, contrived to arrive at the well-known place some hours before the time required. Such a labour, however, rather exhausted him, and he lay down to rest, leaving an order with his servant to call him a few minutes before midnight. He was accordingly summoned as he had desired; but, probably, he was dreaming about other

things than what he was come to see; for, saying "d—n the sun—see him to-morrow," he turned himself in his bed, and fell again into a sound sleep. I have not heard whether he has made a fourth attempt, or whether he is, like Vanderdecken, doomed to pass his life in pursuit of an object which he will never accomplish. If so, the punishment of the one beating round the Cape is incomparably less than his—toiling along through West Bothnia, stung with musquitoes, and burned by a sun that continually deludes him.

After leaving Matarengi a visible decrease in the length of the miles takes place, probably from the distance being reckoned after what it is in summer, when the swamps that cover the country are in many places impassable without making a detour. There being no road to follow, we drove alternately on the Russian and Swedish banks, and not unfrequently on the river itself. There are no longer any regular post-houses, but the peasants always drive

to a particular farm-house, which answers the purpose, and there is little delay in getting horses, as the people are happy enough to gain thereby a few shillings. I came to Jouxengi before my companions had come up, and I was in no little difficulty, as I found it impossible to understand a word of Finnish. It bears not the least affinity to Swedish and Norwegian, and I might have remained there a long while before I should have comprehended even their numbers, had not Mr. Bergmark arrived, and given me the numerals in that language.

The house we were in was a true North Bothnian farm-house ; a large fire blazed that made even the great room uncomfortably warm. Divers trades were going on in different parts of it ; in one corner a man was finishing a set of harness ; in another, the runners of a sledge were receiving the peculiar curve that distinguishes them in Finland ; and a number of lasses, with their shoulders troubled with very little clothing, were keeping half-a-dozen spin-

ning-wheels in constant motion. As soon as they perceived that I wanted a relay, one of the girls put on a little jacket, and, without waiting to button it over her breast, ran to a house a quarter of a mile off to fetch a horse.

It has often struck me, that this incautious exposure from the greatest bearable heat to intense cold, must make these people decrepit at an early age. Yet these extremes seem not to affect them much, and the immoderate use of the vapour-bath must be a still greater trial to their constitutions. Every little village has its "Bastue," or bathing-house, where both sexes enjoy, in primitive simplicity, the pleasures of being parboiled. This indulgence, however their health may stand it, does not improve the looks of the women; while young they are very fair-looking, but as soon as their first years of youth are passed, they sink at once into the class of hags, and retain little outward remains of human beings. The heat of their baths is so great that the men find no

difficulty in shaving, without lather, with the worst possible razors. The process of heating is the same as in Russia, and the same use is made of twigs for beating the bathers.

In summer, a journey across the country between the Icy Sea and the Gulf of Bothnia is an undertaking of great labour and hardship. The first part, to Muonio Niska, can be traversed in boats, but this is a very tedious process, for the river is, in many places, very shallow; frequent waterfalls intervene, and rocks render the navigation very laborious. The boats have to be punted up, and the eddies and currents are so strong that the progress to the north is very slow. Add to this the intolerable heat of the sun, the myriads of insects that torment in every variety of way, stinging and buzzing, and it will be easy to see how preferable the winter travelling is.

I once met with a gentleman in Edinburgh who had gone as far as the sixty-seventh degree north, and he assured me that the fatigue he

endured was excessive. After leaving Ofvre Tornea, he proceeded on foot, accompanied by some Finlanders, who carried his baggage. At night, his only resting-place was at the foot of a tree, where he tried to protect himself from the mosquitoes by a bearskin, not less necessary for cold; for, as the sun gets low, the nights are by no means warm. Yet, these are small obstacles to the progress of an ardent naturalist, and his fatigues will be well repayed by the varieties of new plants that here blossom but to die. The season during which nature is released from its icy shackles is here too short for it not to exert itself. In prosperous seasons, and they are rare, six weeks scarcely intervene between the reaping and sowing of a North Bothnian crop.

Unfortunately, dame Nature often forgets, in her hurry, what is most material, and, instead of grain, the peasant is only rewarded with straw. Such, for the last dozen years, has been the case in this region; yet, with a persever-

ance worthy of better success, the attempt to raise corn has not yet been abandoned : witness the bread that is met with in every house. It certainly can lay claim to that appellation, for meal enters into its composition, but only in just such quantities as to bind the chaff and straw together that form the body of it. Often in handling a piece inadvertently, it has crumbled to dust in my hands ; it approaches nearer to a piece of rough-cast wall than any thing I have ever tasted. Luckily, there is plenty of good pasture, and the morasses produce an abundance of forage for their cattle. By this means, they are able to make up for the badness of the bread, with excellent milk and butter. Of the latter, they even export a large quantity to the copper-works in Finmark. I entered few houses where there were not shelves on each side of the fire, bearing forty or fifty birch pans, filled with cream, an inch thick ; and they contrive to continue making butter the whole winter through.

The houses are not dirty, though the rooms are generally darkened by smoke. In lieu of candles, they use laths of fir, planted obliquely in a stand; these give a cheerful but unsteady light, and require replacing every second minute. Although labouring under such disadvantages, both as regards soil and climate, their state is infinitely preferable to that of the Irish. Their habitations are roomy, built of wood, and furnished with glass windows; they themselves are comfortably clothed and industrious. Many have been driven by the failure of crops to seek for employment elsewhere; and those who have gone to the copper-works at Alten are preferred to the Norwegians, as working more cheerfully. There is no diminution in the size of the cattle, as one advances towards the north; the horses struck me as larger than those in the middle and south of Sweden.

As regards the trees, a gradual decrease in bulk was visible after leaving the Arctic circle behind me; this was more owing, perhaps, to

the increased elevation of the ground than the latitude. The ascent is gradual on the southern side of the mountains, and would be imperceptible were it not for the falls that occur in the river in different places. The country is also less inhabited, and the distance between the farms becomes doubled. Beyond Muonio Niska, not more than two or three are to be met on the way to the Norwegian settlements on the coast. A few Finlanders have settled thus far in the wilderness; but it is more with a view of fishing than agriculture; and their houses are generally fixed on that account near some lake.

At Turtola Mr. Bergmark introduced me to a Finnish gentleman's house, where we dined, and in the evening I proceeded on my route. The next morning, arriving at a place called Kollare, I found I should have to drive with the same horse seventy miles. This struck me as rather a long stage, and I inquired of a woman, who had learned a little Swedish at Happaranda, whether there was any place on the way to stop

at. There were two, she said, and if I found horses at either I might change ; but she assured me that when the road was well beaten a horse could go over the distance in ten or eleven hours. I never met with unwillingness to provide me with horses ; and though perfectly at their mercy, and unable to make myself understood, I never found any one take advantage of me. Whatever hour of the night I came in, they generally made a fire for me, and those who were awakened by my entrance, rose and lighted their pipes. The women partook more of this luxury than in any country that I have seen ; but a cigar seemed beyond their comprehension, and they stared at it with evident astonishment.

After passing Kœngis, I left the Tornea river, which takes its rise in the north-west, and continued due north along the Muonio, which falls into it in this neighbourhood. I did not avail myself of an invitation I had to call at the Forges, but proceeded without stopping. Bars are

chiefly manufactured at this place, and conveyed in boats down to the head of the Gulf. Latterly the works have not been much attended to, and are in sad repair, the late owners having failed. I was told that the neighbourhood produced very rich iron-ore, and only required capital to make it very valuable property.

Some miles to the west is the famous mountain of Gellivara, in Lulea Lapmark, which is one mass of ore, yielding seventy-five per cent. iron. The excellence of the mineral, however, is of little use, as there is neither a road leading to it, nor wood for smelting the ore in the neighbourhood. If worked the ore would have to be conveyed in winter to the forges by reindeer, a mode of transportation which would be so expensive as to counterbalance the advantages arising from the richness of the mine. In many parts of Lapland iron-ore is found in a state that requires little trouble to make it fit for use, and it is unfortunate that the extent and wildness of the country render it unavailable.

While waiting for my horse at Kollare, I observed the woman with whom I was talking looking very anxiously through the window. As there was nothing for the eye to rest on but snow, I inquired what took up so much of her attention. "The sun will rise above the horizon to-day," said she. I could now fully understand her anxiety about the return of a friend whom she had not seen for more than six weeks. The sun did rise, but it was only to show himself for a moment, and then sink again. It must not, however, be supposed, that with his disappearance darkness at once took his place, as with us. For near three hours after, the reflection of his rays cheered the way, and when the redness that marked the west had entirely faded away, the moon rose and threw a flood of light over the snow, sufficient to let me see the landscape as far as by daylight.

Thus we proceeded along the Muonio about thirty-five miles, when the driver suddenly turned up the bank and halted at a small

house. I jumped out of my sledge, and threw open the door of the kitchen, when a most curious scene presented itself. The principal feature in the tableau was a Lapland woman, possessing no great personal attractions, and under the influence of drink, probably stronger than reindeer's milk. She was clothed in furs, that bore evidence of long service, and had the dirtiest face I ever saw. The floor of the room was covered with children in the same style of dress; and in a corner another woman was rolling herself about, complaining of pain. As I saw an old man and a couple of fair children, I at once judged that the former was the master of the house and a Finlander. He told me, in broken Swedish, that the women belonged to two families that had joined their herds of reindeer, and were moving towards the west. The men were gone out to look after their cattle, which amounted to about three hundred. I found that the Finlander's horses were out, and that I must wait here till mine was

ready to go twenty miles further. As I was a new comer, the Lapland hag turned all her attentions to me, and insisted upon my taking her youngest child, a favour from which I had great difficulty in excusing myself. It was no easy matter to prevent her tossing it at me, and I began to be fearful about the safety of the little creature. At last, finding me resolute, she retired, muttering something, that from the tone could not be mistaken for a compliment, and amused herself kicking her half-starved dogs, and pulling about her numerous brats.

There was a great contrast between hers and the farmer's children, and I cannot say that it was favourable to the former, who looked like Esquimeaux, and were as broad as they were long. Altogether I cannot look upon the three hours that I passed at Kikilenge, as the pleasantest time of the journey. The place was dirty, the company disagreeable, and there was no more light than what proceeded from the stove. These would have been trifling objec-

tions, had I been able to remain in the open air; but that I found so severe, that I was obliged to return to the close room, and amuse myself with the frolics of the drunken dame, till the horse was baited and ready to proceed.

At Parkajoki there was luckily a horse, so that having awakened about thirty individuals, and thus given them an opportunity of lighting their pipes, for which I do not doubt they felt grateful, I entered my sledge, and fell asleep; in which state I continued till my driver awoke me by screaming into my ear some jaw-breaking words, to the purport that I was at Muonio Niska.

CHAPTER X.

Muonio-Niska and Tornea Lapmark—Lapland costume
—Snow-shoes—Sledge and harness—Reindeer—Hætta
—Wolves—Moss.

THE house, at the door of which the peasant had deposited me, belonged to a Norwegian trader, who invited me in, and whose hospitality I enjoyed till I was able to equip myself for my Lapland journey, and procure reindeer. It was fortunate for me that I did not drive to the inn on the Russian side of the river, for there scarcely any one understood a word but Finnish, and my helplessness would have been complete.

My host at first recommended me to proceed with horses to Kallisovando, as the most agreeable mode of travelling; but I was too eager to try the reindeer to listen to his objections. A messenger was accordingly sent off to the nearest Lap encampment, some four-and-twenty miles off. The man returned the next day, with the news that the people had been obliged to strike their tents and shift their quarters, from the number of wolves that infested the neighbourhood. Mr. D., whom I had left behind at Hernosand, had now come up, and the messenger was sent off again in search of the wanderers, for a larger number of reindeer; and we passed the interval in procuring the different parts of the Laponic costume, which it is customary to wear on journeys performed with reindeer.

This dress combines great warmth, with the advantage of being light, and leaving sufficient freedom to the limbs. The principal piece is the "mouda," or fur gown, closed all round, and

resembling a shirt, of sufficient length to reach the calves o the legs. The skins of young deer are chiefly used for this part of the dress, and when attention is paid to appearances, the backs only of the darkest calves are selected. The collar, and sometimes the cuff, is ornamented with stripes of red cloth ; the sleeves are rather short, as long gauntlets cover the arm halfway up to the elbow. The "Poussa," or breeches, are worn by both sexes, and are confined round the ankle by woollen bands (Voudtaka), that connect the shoes with the rest of the dress, and prevent the introduction of snow. These bands are generally variegated, and measure from twelve to fourteen feet in length. Custom has devoted particular parts of the hide to the different articles of the Laplander's costume ; thus the gloves are always made of the skin that covers the feet, as the cleft of the hoofs answers in shape to the part of the hand between the thumb and forefinger. The skin of the *hocks*, being the



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mark generally wear a bearskin tippet over their shoulders, with the teeth or the claws of the animal hanging over the breast. This is by far the most expensive part of their apparel, and, if made of the spoils of a young silver bear, is rather ornamental, and certainly most comfortable. The costume is completed by a belt that confines the moudda, and from which hangs an enormous butcher's knife in a sheath, a flint and steel, and a pipe. The brandy-flask, and every thing else that requires to be kept from freezing, is dropped by the collar into the space between the moudda and the body above the belt, and, when wanted, is drawn out through the sleeve. The women's winter dress differs only in having the belt worn higher than in those of the other sex. The men's moudda does not generally reach lower than the knees, being drawn up to form the pouch before mentioned, to which they give the name of "puogna."

The head-dress varies in different parts. In

Lulea Lapmark, red or blue cloth caps are in use; at Koutokeino, the women wear them of the former colour, ornamented with tinsel, and terminating like a horse's hoof. In Finmark, the men's are conical and bordered with dog's fur.

The Laplanders have always been noted for the use they make of snow-shoes. Their old name of Skritt Finner arose from the celerity with which they glided along the snow with these useful machines. They call them "andror," and make them of wood; they are about six feet long and five inches wide, and slightly turned up in front. They are not generally both of the same length, for considerable facility in turning is acquired by having one a foot shorter than the other. A band of willow, twisted into a circle, through which the feet are thrust, suffices to keep them fast. While running, the hunter steadies himself with a long staff, shod with a wheel about three inches in diameter to prevent its sinking. Without his

snow-shoes, he would be indeed helpless, for he would find it difficult to move far on the surface, even with his wide kallokahs. With their assistance he can pursue his worst enemy—the wolf, or give chase to the strange wild deer that occasionally insinuate themselves into his herd.

In summer a very old moudda, with the hair worn off, or a suit of coarse cloth of the same cut, takes the place of the warm clothing. The women have their belts ornamented with silver, and rings, to which they attach their pipes (for both sexes indulge in the weed), tinder, knives, and needles, with reindeer sinews which are used for thread. As the summer dress is more open in front than the winter, the part of the breast that would be thereby exposed is covered with a piece of cloth fastened round the throat, and falling within the robe. Upon this part the girls expend all their talents in needlework. Gold and silver embroidery, small plates of the latter metal, and curious devices in different coloured cloths, are lavished upon this “atsaleppa.”

The sledge used with reindeer is in general called "serre" that which is used for traveling, and which is heaved over the fire-part is distinguished by the name of "pukka." In shape it resembles a small sea-boat the stern of which has been cut off and replaced by an upright board. It is hinker built with a broad keel and sufficiently high behind to support the back. From stern to stern it is scarcely more than four feet long, and just wide enough to admit one person of moderate dimensions. It is dragged by a trace made of deer-skin, fastened to the bottom of a collar made of the same material. This is passed between the fore and hind legs of the deer, and is made fast to the head of the boat. A single rein of plaited deer's sinews, or walrus-hide, serves at once to guide and to drive him on. Should he lag, it is easy to quicken his pace, by drawing it sharply along his side. The thong is not fastened to his horns, as is generally supposed, but round his

head, and it is sufficient to throw it over to his right side to make him move on. The traveller is usually bound in the sledge with cords, which prevent his being dislodged when the pulka is thrown on its side, an event of hourly occurrence with beginners. With such tackle it is a doubt which is the greatest feat, driving a postchaise a whole stage without a pole, or bringing a pulka down a steep descent at a gallop, without reaching the bottom before the deer.

With regard to the deer, none that I saw were larger than the common English fallow deer. Those in Russian Lapland, near Kola, are said to be much taller, while the wild ones in Spitzbergen, though exceedingly fat, are much inferior in size. All, however, are much stouter in the limbs than any of the same family, and have feet peculiarly formed for the climate they inhabit. The hoofs do not look remarkably large when raised off the ground, yet each time they strike the snow, spread so as to cover a greater surface than a bullock's foot. By this

formation they are enabled, with their comparatively light carcasses, to traverse wilds of untrodden snow, sinking scarce four inches, where a horse would be irretrievably lost.

It has been remarked that no animal is so difficult to keep alive out of his native country as the reindeer. The limits of the regions suited to his nature are more narrowly defined than those of any other known creature. It is difficult to keep him as far south as Stockholm; the warmth of the climate even there being too great for him. I nevertheless think that there is still a greater difficulty to be overcome than that of climate, to which he might be hardened, after a few generations. The spreading of their feet would make moving over a hard, dry surface a very toilsome exercise. In their own country the snow has scarce time to melt before it again covers the soil, and, during the short interval that it is bare, they tread chiefly on soft morasses.

The horns are palmated and very eccentric in

their shapes; most deer have an antler that runs down the front of their face as far as the nose, and serves as a protection. They are of a coarse quality, and fit only for boiling into glue. Many lose theirs in winter, from some accident or other, and it is rare to see a number together without marking a good proportion with only one, and not a few totally deprived of that ornament, and bearing a great similitude to calves. Unlike other deer, the females are furnished with horns as well as the males, but much smaller, and not thicker than a man's little finger. None but the havers (Herke) are used for draught; the Simmel, or cow, is kept merely for breeding and milking, and but a very limited number of stags are preserved for each herd.

Two faults have struck me in all the representations of reindeer that are met with in accounts of Lapland winter travelling; the first is the great size that is given to the animal in proportion to the pulka and man that he drags behind him. The other inaccuracy is in draw-

ing them always in full gallop, with their heads up, like leaders in a Brighton stage. That, for a short distance of four or five miles, they can be urged into that pace, I will not deny. Returning from church, with an exuberance of animal as well as mental, spirits, the little fellows will sometimes try what their favourites can do, and make them fly like a train on a railroad. But still this is not the customary pace of the reindeer; he chiefly trots with his head low, the whole weight being on the back of his neck, which rises into a slight hunch at the withers. His appearance is one of extreme distress; his mouth he keeps open, and, by his excessive panting, leads one, unacquainted with his habits, to suppose that he will drop down dead in a few minutes. Yet nothing is more deceptive; for I have driven a deer, who exhibited all these symptoms while yet in sight of the starting-place, seventy miles in the course of the day, without finding that he was more exhausted the following day. It is his hardiness and ability to pro-

vide himself with food, whatever be the depth of the snow, that render him valuable. In this last respect, he surpasses even the camel, for he never dies of want, and rarely of fatigue.

When all our arrangements were completed, a Laplander made his appearance with seven reindeer. He was not above four feet five inches high—in fact, one of the shortest of his pigmy race; but what he wanted in height, he made up for in circumference. Furthermore, his head was so imbedded in a vast bearskin tippet, that he had the appearance of having been decapitated. His long lank hair, and high cheekbones, strongly reminded me of an Esquimaux; but a good-humoured twinkle in his eye gave us hopes that he would be an agreeable guide. He was to convey us to the village of Koutokeino, in Finmark, sixteen Swedish miles north of Niska. The way to it lies chiefly in Russian Lapland, which, following the bend of the Muonio, makes a crook between Norway and Sweden. Of the reindeer, two were for ourselves, as many for

the baggage; one for the Wapphus, or guide, and the two remaining ones were to follow as a *corps de reserve*, in case of unforeseen accidents, such as one of the cattle breaking his leg, or being prematurely tired out.

The next morning the cavalcade, if it may be so called, was arranged for the journey. The luggage was firmly packed in the kerres, used for cargo only, and which are therefore wider than the pulkas, and open at the stern. Great care must be taken to have nothing loose, or liable to shake away; for, in driving through the woods, the kerres often strike against projecting rocks and stumps of trees, by which they are overturned, and may be dragged in this style for half a mile, before some new impediment in the way restores the sledge to its right position. Another thing that makes the transport of fragile articles rather precarious is, that the deer's hind legs are often on the sledge in descending a hill. On the top of the baggage of one of the kerres, the guide tied his long

snow-shoes, and this being the last precaution to be taken, we moved ahead. The Wapphus led the way, followed by the baggage sledges, and the two spare deer, each fastened to the one before him; and we, as beginners, brought up the rear, depending more on the training of the deer, than our driving, for the chances of keeping up with the rest of the train.

The breaking in of deer for draught is a very tedious and uncertain process; only a small proportion of those taken in hand will be fit to lead a train; others will go best single; and by far the greatest number are fit only for following in the line. In the severe discipline that he undergoes, the reindeer, though patient, will, like the camel, sometimes turn restive, and show fight against his master. In such cases, he not only uses his horns, but also strikes with his fore feet. The only mode to protect oneself against such an attack, is to overturn the pulka, and let him strike to his heart's content; yet I doubt whether a stranger, swaddled up in his

sledge, would find it easy to go through such a complicated evolution before the sharp hoofs of his antagonist had given him a good drubbing. Luckily, such instances of rebellion only occur when they are being broken in, and the old ones are tame enough, if fairly treated.

The Wapphus rarely uses a pulka, or sits at his ease ; he generally takes his position with one leg stretched out, and the other folded under him, in order to be more at liberty to spring out, and put his deer in the right track when they turn out of it. This they frequently do when tired, dodging from side to side, and moving in circles, instead of going ahead. Considering it was a beginning, our start was fair enough, and having cleared the barking of the curs of the neighbourhood, and fairly got out of the long straggling village, we proceeded in an orderly manner. The sensation was so new, and the exercise of balancing the pulka so violent at first, that I was soon thrown into a perspiration. When we had proceeded some seven or eight

miles, our Wapphus showed, by his manner, that he was not perfectly acquainted with the route to Hætta, which was the first point that we were making for. He looked first at one hill, then at another, and frequently drove off the track into the deep snow, varying his course from east to west, in a most inexplicable fashion. This sort of progress gave no promise of coming nearer the end of our journey, and I was beginning to expostulate on the subject, when the little fellow espied some Finlanders about three miles off, from whom we learnt the right track. We soon after entered a more thickly-wooded tract of country, and, as the paths were fewer the further we advanced, we were not at fault again during the rest of the day.

Once, and once only, we passed a Finnish house, but saw no living being near it. In crossing these vast plains and hills, there is little for the eye to rest on beyond the stunted birch, and occasionally a huge rock, that protrudes above the snow. For a few minutes in

every hour we stopped to allow the cattle to eat a little snow, for which they seemed very eager, snapping a bit up even while trotting. After it was become dark we heard the barking of dogs, and passed an encampment, consisting of five or six tents; and a man belonging to it accompanied us with some reindeer, and a quantity of hay, for some miles. The latter must have been for the people at Hætta, for reindeer are not partial to it, and, except when pressed by hunger, will seldom eat it, and then only in small quantities.

In the evening we halted at Hætta, some forty miles from Niska; we here found a farm by the side of a lake, and were put into a small detached room, in which we were to pass the night. The quarters were not very agreeable, from the numerous fissures in the walls through which the wind rushed in. With the help of a hatchet, we cut off some pieces of a haunch of venison, and turned them into most unsatisfactory chops; for my companion had lost his

cooking-vessels, and in broiling the meat we found that the outside was burnt to a cinder before the inside was thawed. The people of the house added some excellent milk and large flat sheets of bread. This part of the feast we found so like sawdust that we dispensed with it, in the shape of food, and used it, as the Trojans of old, instead of plates. After having enjoyed a very frugal repast, we spread our skins on the floor, and laid down, in all our panoply, to sleep.

In the morning we were not sorry to resume our journey, and leave the cold hut for the pulkas. Lakes and hills succeeded one another, without presenting any new feature. As we advanced, the trees perceptibly dwindled into bushes, and every branch was incased in thick frost. Our guide had told us that we must wait a few hours at a "little room," and when we came in sight of it, we found the description fully agree as to its size; for, to make room for

us, the dogs had to be turned out into the plain.

It was a Lapland fisherman's hut, and built of logs, rather better fitted one to the other than those of our last lodging. The family consisted of a man, his wife, and her sister. In the course of the evening, two other men walked in, and a large pot was put on the fire, with about two stone of meat in it. As I observed one of the women, who superintended the cooking, throwing in a great deal of salt, I supposed it was intended for future use. I was, however, deceived, for the party, as soon as the pot simmered, began their supper, and in ten minutes not a morsel remained.

When their appetite had been appeased by this slight repast, the fishermen began to exhibit some inclination to trade, and produced a couple of ermines, a wolfskin and some hides of reindeer. Among the latter were some wild ones, which are darker than those of the tame,

and can be known by the ears being entire. All that have an owner are marked by notches and holes in that part. The natives can always swear to their cattle, even by the horns; they have a particular aversion to ascertaining the exact number in their herd, either from a superstitious idea that, if counted, it will decrease, or from an unwillingness to pay the amount of taxes at which they might in consequence be rated.

Another peculiarity, the abstaining from killing wolves, is common to the North American Indians and the Laplanders, but arises from very different motives; the savage considers it unfair to interfere with a brother hunter, while the timid little fellows here are actuated by a fear, that for every wolf they destroy, ten more will come in his place. Yet, this beast is the worst visiter they have, and levies far higher contributions on them than either the king or the priest. As long as the deer stands, he can defend himself, and even a bell round his neck

will scare off his aggressor; but the natural fear of the reindeer will always make him fly, and is then easily brought down by his pursuer. I have heard of a man losing as many as two hundred in this manner in the course of a winter; and when it is considered that the present value of a good "herke," or havier, is about twelve shillings, it will be seen what damage is committed by these voracious marauders.

Having made our bargains in skins, we lay down for a couple of hours, and started again at twelve at night. As the morning advanced, we approached the higher grounds, and had some enlivening rolls down steep hills. We had now passed into Finmark. Even in this remote quarter the boundary of Norway is marked by a line of the breadth of a common English road, cut in the forest, which is continued down the whole frontier. Coming to a spot where there was plenty of moss, we halted to allow our cattle to refresh themselves. It is curious to see them feed on these occasions; for, though

not disengaged from the "pulkas," as soon as they scent the moss beneath the snow, they begin scraping it aside with the fore foot, and in a few seconds dig through four or five feet to the ground. Sometimes there is so much snow, that they disappear in the holes they have made, and their horns alone are seen, while the "kerres" remains above them on the surface.

In later years, the reindeer have occasionally suffered severely from the mildness of the weather. This happens when the surface of the snow is first thawed, and afterwards rendered impenetrable by a crust formed by a subsequent frost. The poor animals are thus unable to get at their only food, and die in great numbers. This state of things, added to the voracity of the wolf has often stripped the mountain Laplander of his wealth, and driven him to the coast to live by fishing.

The moss (*lichen rangiferinus*) is called, in Laponic, "viste;" it is of a pale greenish colour,

rather dry, and of a somewhat musty taste. It bears no resemblance whatever to the Iceland moss, which is rather like dandelion, when green and fresh.

CHAPTER XI.

Koutokeino—The Laplanders' habits—Their language—Singing—Diseases—Origin of their name—The mountains—Sollivara.

ABOUT midday, we arrived at our destination, and found ourselves in the village of Koutokeino. Here was a church, which is visited every winter by the pastor, a Norwegian, who lives at Porsanger Fiord, near the North cape. The village is inhabited by a few Lapland families, who have deserted the wandering habits of their fathers, and settled down

in wooden huts, living principally by letting out reindeer to travellers, and conveying goods from the sea-coast to the interior. The whole of the race must be divided into two classes; the mountaineers, who are migratory and follow their herds, keeping in the highlands during winter, and moving to the coast in summer; and the fishing Laplanders, who are stationary, and possessed of no reindeer. The Koutokeino people form an exception to both; I suspect that they set up for husbandmen; for I observed fences in different parts of the immediate neighbourhood, but I did not hear what they attempt to raise so far in the highlands. During their journey the mountaineers carry all their property with them. Their silver coin alone is excepted; distrust even of his wife and children, the principal feature in the Laplander's character, prevents his risking his idol's safety in his migrations. It is, therefore, generally buried in some unsuspected spot. I have heard of one concealing his pelf under the track

the most used, and it has not unfrequently happened that persons have accidentally met with considerable sums placed where the improbability of a treasure being concealed was its only protection. Their immoderate love for silver coin is notorious; seldom does a piece that has fallen into their hands again find its way into circulation. In their character a mighty contest rages between the rival attractions of brandy and silver dollars. In the selection of a wife the charms of beauty have little power in comparison with the size of the herd that she brings with her as a portion. On marrying a son or daughter it is usual for the parents to give their children a part of their stock to form a herd of their own.

They are not all so ignorant as they are supposed to be, though it is generally allowed that their capacity is limited. At Koutokeino there is a school supported by the government, and conducted by a Laplander, who also rejoices in the office of parish-clerk, and interpreter to the

parson—a triple dignity which he supports with as much humility as can be expected from so great a man ; but it would be useless to deny that this quality has its bounds, and it was easy to perceive that this Dominie could fully appreciate his own value. He even affected a kind of distinction of dress, at least in colour ; his “moud-da” was perfectly white, which I did not observe any other man wear, though some of the girls did, probably in token of their virgin purity.

With respect to the *physique* of the Laplanders, it struck me that they are by no means as dark as travellers would have us suppose them to be, and even the hue that is prevalent among them while in the mountains, is partially lost when they remove to the more moderate climate of Stockholm, and are subjected to frequent ablutions. I one day met in the capital a family consisting of a man, his wife, and their son and daughter. The old couple still indulged in their native filth, and were most disgusting to look at ; but the young people had

paid more attention to their persons, and were of the complexion of Spaniards. The girl, if she might be so called, for she was twenty-four years of age, though she appeared little more than fifteen, had a remarkably good figure, and had her hair plaited in two long tails, that hung far down her back. Her eyes were dark and piercing, for they had recovered from the effects of smoke, and her hands and feet were beautifully small. The greatest drawback to their being good-looking is the height of their cheek-bones, and the sharpness of their chins. An intermarriage between a Swede, or Norwegian, and a Laplander, is almost unknown. The Finlanders are not so choice, and such a connexion sometimes takes place between them. Though these two people differ in personal appearance, there is no doubt that they both belong to the same race that peoples the north of Asiatic Russia.

Their languages, though resembling one another in many respects, have not the least simili-

tude in several objects that are not only common to both, but are always present, and have probably not changed names for a long period. For instance, the sun, the sky, are in Laponic *Beive* and *Albma*; in Finnish, *Auringa*, *Tawas*; the animals most known to both, the bear, the wolf, and the fox, have no common appellation in both languages. On the other hand, many words descriptive of country, such as lake (*L. Jaur*; *F. Jarvi*); mountain (*L. Vvara*; *F. Vvouri*), river (*Jocki* in both), present little difference. The three above instances will explain the terminations that mark the names of most places in Lapland.

Three dialects prevail, that of the Luleans, said to be the harshest; the Umeans, who have incorporated many Swedish words; and, lastly, that of the inhabitants of the Tornea district, which approaches nearest to the Finnish. Their language has the reputation of being melodious. I will not deny that their voices are generally soft, but of the quality of the words themselves,

the reader will best judge from the following specimen, being the Lord's prayer :

"Ackie myan jocko le almen, passa heidta tuun nama, quai kipaate tuun rike, heidta tuun villio neukockte, almen naw ai adnemea alme, mijan paiwepaiwen laipem watte mijn udnin, ja laite mijn mijan suttuaid audagasin neukockte ai mija mijan welgolagiatan ; ja alle mijan laidi tocko kiasge labma mutto wall variable mijan patrast."

Many of these words are evidently of Swedish extraction. Their singing is monotonous, without any regular melody, but accompanied with much grimace and gesticulation. While driving, they will often beguile the length of the way by improvising ; the subject of their chant being generally the voracity of the wolf, or the daring of the " Moudda Aigja," or old man in the fur-coat, as they call the bear ; and, by way of variation, they imitate the cries of these animals.

They are subject to few diseases, and live

frequently to the advanced age of eighty or ninety. A sort of leprosy, called, in Norwegian, "radsyge," sometimes shows itself among them, and it is said that their teeth often become worm-eaten. Linnæus, in his *Flora Laponica*, mentions their being often seized with cholic and spasms, that put them to the greatest torture in summer. This never occurs in the mountains; but in the woods, when obliged to drink water, rendered half putrid by the rays of the sun, the complaint is common, but is overcome by the use of angelica. As they indulge in no luxury beyond brandy and tobacco, and, during a great part of the year, are out of the reach of even these, it may be naturally expected that they enjoy a robust old age; indeed, I have often been struck at the slow inroads on their constitution by years and hard living.

The name of Lapp, by which they are known in Sweden, is variously derived by different writers; most consider it to come from Lappa,

a patch, which is not unlikely, for they are looked on with supreme contempt by the Swedes. The name they give themselves is Sami, or Samiladz. The Norwegians call them Fins, and distinguish the Finlanders, or Suomilins, settled among them, by the name of Quœner. It is supposed that they are the aboriginal inhabitants of Scandinavia, and have been gradually driven back by the Norwegians and Swedes. There is considerable doubt about their early history. It appears that King Magnus Laudalus of Sweden gave them up to a people in Bothnia called Biarkarlar. Yet it is not quite settled who these last were, and whether they were the inhabitants of a particular parish, or of a larger district. At present the Lapmarks belong to West and North Bothnia, and the Norwegian part is included in the Amt, or province of West and East Finmark. In the latter they are liable to all the duties of citizens, and some have occasionally to serve as soldiers in the

fortress of Wardoe Hus, on the eastern side of the North Cape.

Besides the Laplanders, we found, at Koutokeino, two Norwegian traders, who sojourn here a few months in the winter, and return to Hammerfest in the summer. The arrival of strangers was soon made known to them, and they invited us to share their temporary habitation. The part of the house they lived in was smaller than the fisherman's hut. A small window threw an indifferent light into the cell, for though the sun was visible on the neighbouring hills he had not yet gladdened Koutokeino with his return. A little phial with quicksilver, served the purpose of thermometer, for here the mercury in winter is often on the point of freezing; and one of them told me that he had seen it freeze hard in the room, notwithstanding the stove was red hot. In such a case nothing but violent exercise could keep up the animal heat. A gentleman at Turtola, near

Køengis, told me he had been able to hammer a ball of mercury flat the year before, and at Roraas, in Norway, such excessive cold is by no means uncommon. I had, for the first time, felt the burning effects of frost; having occasion to use both my hands, I put a pair of silver spectacles to my lips, and found on taking them away that I tore off the skin. White patches also began to exhibit themselves on the face, which afterwards became brown, and lastly raw.

The room was homely, but it contained a gratifying sight in the shape of two shelves covered with books. These afforded their only amusement to the Norwegians during the long nights that they had to spend alone; for solitude would almost be preferable to the society of the villagers who crowded in, and made themselves perfectly at home. Not satisfied with filling the outer room, that served as a kitchen, they invaded the little sanctum where we were sitting. At last, with some difficulty,

the room was cleared of all except ourselves and a young damsel, who sat down by my side, and amused herself in examining the strangers' actions very minutely. She was far from bad-looking, and, had her face not been of a deep red, from exposure to cold, she might have passed muster among the Finlanders farther south.

As the clergyman's house was untenanted at the time we might have taken up our quarters in it, had we intended to sojourn any time in Koutokeino; but as the attractions of the place were limited to a crowd of half-drunken Laplanders, who seemed desirous of nothing so much as becoming wholly so, we made up our minds to remain where we were, till a fresh supply of reindeer could be procured. Our hosts accordingly sent for the father of our fair companion, whose duty it was to procure deer for travellers.

In Finmark the Laps are bound, when summoned, to do posting duty, and the law has

established a regular rate of payment for this service. About twopence farthing per mile is charged for each reindeer, and half as much again for the guide. It is also necessary to take a couple of spare ones, in case of accidents, such as breaking one of their legs, or their getting completely tired out, and for these deer half the usual rate is paid. Some difficulty arose about the number to be engaged, as the "Skjuts-Skaffare," or forwarder of post, was exceedingly intoxicated, and instead of minding what was said to him, was vociferous in his demand for more brandy.

When these troublesome fellows had been dismissed, we sat down to a most excellent venison stew, which one of the Norwegians had been dressing, while the other was arguing with the Laplanders. It was not long before the evening set in, and with the help of a good cigar, and the conversation of our hosts, we spent the time very pleasantly till the hour of rest. The room was so small, that when a few

reindeers' skins had been laid on the floor, and we had all four laid down on them, it would have been difficult to have found a vacant spot on which to place one's foot. Yet this was rather an advantage than otherwise, as the place, notwithstanding the stove, was still any thing but warm.

About midnight the Wapphus arrived with another man and the deer; and the usual difficulties of starting down a descent having been overcome, we glided rapidly along the surface of the river Alten. We had not, however, advanced much more than a Norwegian mile,* when one of the men who accompanied us discovered that he had left his provision-bag behind. I suspected, at the time, that this was a piece of cunning, of which these people are by no means destitute; and, very shortly after, I was confirmed in my opinion by the Laplander who remained detaching the deer from the pulkas, and taking them to a neighbouring hill.

Here they were left to graze till the return of

* About seven and a half English miles.

the improvident Wapphus, who made his second appearance five hours after. The interval was sufficient to try the patience of one more comfortably situated ; but to my companion, who could not sleep, the delay was particularly uncomfortable. The pulka is at no time a very commodious vehicle, being unprovided with a support for the shoulders, and as it is too short to lie in at full length, he was obliged to sit upright the whole time. For my part, that posture became soon so irksome, and I felt so inclined to sleep, that I lay over, with my head and shoulders on the snow, but well protected by a bearskin tippet, while the remainder of my person was incased in the sledge turned on its side, very much like a snail in its shell. In this way I soon forgot where I was, and, though I cannot say that I rose refreshed, I escaped the tedium of counting the minutes, and straining my ears to catch the clatterings of the returning reindeer's hoofs.

At last we moved again, and continued our course down the river. As well as I could judge by the uncertain twilight, the breadth of it could not be much less than a mile ; but, though it did not wind much, and there were no impediments in the way, the track was so tortuous, that we were a dozen times close to either bank, in the course of as many English miles. This arises from the difficulty of getting a reindeer to go ahead in a straight line where there is no track, and I have observed that it is almost impossible to make those that follow correct the error. The consequence is, that if only six or seven sledges travel in company, they form a waving line like an S, and go over half as much ground again as a well-driven horse would.

We were on very high ground ; and by the time that we approached the foot of the mountains, the day dawned. The most disagreeable part of the journey was now to be entered upon, for the country between Koutokeino and Alten

is uninhabited from the coldness and loftiness of its situation, and the track passes over the extremity of the chain of mountains that runs through Norway and Sweden. In these dreary regions the traveller rarely meets any one but the Laplander hurrying, like himself, with all his speed to a more moderate climate. In the more lofty mountains the native himself feels it impossible to remain. His herd finds little food beneath the snow, and the violence of the weather makes it dangerous even to cross them.

“Beyond the line of growth of the fir,” says a Swedish author, “at 1300 feet above the level of the sea, the birch alone produces a species of brushwood, bearing on its stunted trunk and knotty branches evidence of the rigour of the climate, and the impetuosity of the storms that prevail there. Before proceeding much farther the stranger will find even these trees so low that a mere turf will raise him sufficiently to

overlook them. Yet even beyond this point the Laplander will pitch his tent, induced by the quantity of lichen that is still to be found scarcely 800 feet from the perpetual frost. At 2100 feet the water contains no fish, and at 400 farther the dwarf birch entirely gives place to the lichens, and a few other plants, which keep on a faint struggle with the snow, till the height of 4300 feet above the sea, when the frost gains the ascendancy, and every sign of vegetation ceases. The naturalist and the white sparrow," continues he, "alone pass this line. Beyond it appear those enormous glaciers which present to the mind the idea of a tempestuous sea suddenly checked, and rendered immoveable by the frost." These remarks refer more particularly to the southern parts of Lulea Lapmark and the neighbourhood of Sulitelma, the loftiest mountain in Sweden. Its summit is 5541 feet above the level of the sea, and it owes its name, which signifies "Mountain of

the Feast," to the circumstance of the Laplanders formerly offering their sacrifices here to their god, Stourra Passe.

After proceeding along the river Alten, between sixteen and twenty miles, we left it to continue its course through ravines, and began the ascent of the mountains. The cold was intense, and the weather rather stormy; but, fortunately the wind blew on our backs, and except when a sudden turn presented our sides to the blast, we escaped much inconvenience. A few seconds, however, in this situation was sufficient to cover our faces with a mask of congealed drift, and form icicles from our eyelashes. At one time the wind rose to a whirlwind, and it was with the greatest difficulty that we could keep in sight of one another. We stopped twice in the course of the day, but found no moss, and were obliged to proceed without feeding the deer. This, of itself, was annoyance enough to the Laplanders, and I was struck at the remark

of the elder one, that the intensity of the cold and hardness of the snow, made the draught much heavier.

After the short interval of daylight the journey became very wearisome ; as, besides the cattle being hungry and tired, a mist arose which prevented us forming any idea of any thing around us. Occasionally, this dispersed for a short time, and gave way to brilliant northern lights, which buoyed up our spirits till the disheartening darkness returned, and left us in the unpleasant position which we feel in a dream, when a fantastic change takes place, and we are unaccountably transported from a scene of splendour to dreary wastes and darkness.

From a reverie of this kind we were roused by several voices which we heard around us, but we were some time discovering whence they arose. At length, we distinguished dim forms of reindeer, which extended on each side of us as far as the eye could pierce the haze, and we

learned that they belonged to a train of two hundred sledges that were crossing the mountains, conveying merchandise from the coast to the interior. Caravans of this kind are continually traversing the country, which could not be supplied at any other season of the year, as the reindeer is of little use for carrying burdens. Each reindeer draws two hundred pounds' weight after him, and a string of ten requires the care of only one man; they are each tied to the sledge that precedes them, and follow in Indian file.

The usual way in which a reindeer evinces his fatigue now began to show itself. The leader who drew the Wapphus's sledge kept continually running off the track, and as often the driver was obliged to jump out and drag him by the rein into the right road. As the whole suite followed every step of the leader, on several occasions the tail of the train got entangled with its head, and more than once the reindeer

that formed the centre were taken off their legs by a sudden jerk from those before and behind them, and dragged some fifty yards on their sides. One awkward deer, I remember, got the thong that held him entangled round both one of his antlers and forefoot, and in this helpless state was carried along, half throttled, till he was released by the horn breaking off.

At last, after an indefinite number of hours, we reached our halting-place. Winding a watch, or even taking it out of the pocket was quite out of the question, as the hands became frostbitten by exposure without gloves, even for a few minutes. Considering however that we had travelled seventy miles since morning, it could not be less than eleven or twelve o'clock when we heard the welcome news that we had finished our day's work. I was dozing at the time, keeping just sufficiently awake to balance the sledge, when we came to a standstill, and the Wapphus released my

deer; as the thong which I steered him by was twisted round my wrist, I was soon thoroughly awakened by his half hauling me out of the pulka, inside which I was laced by cross ropes.

I naturally looked round to survey my resting-place for the night, but was some time before I discovered a sort of circular trench within which the ground rose to an apex, perhaps three feet higher than the surrounding plain. By this time the Wapphus having disengaged my companion offered to conduct us to the "gamma," as it is called in Finmark. In the side of the trench, upon closer examination, there appeared a doorway, about four feet high, which led into a vestibule of corresponding grandeur. When I had crept into this place, for the accumulation of snow inside made it impossible to enter in a more dignified manner, I found a little door which opened into a room about twelve feet square. The roof sloped up to an opening

in the middle, which served to let the smoke out. Four upright posts with crosstrees occupied the centre, where the fire was to be made, and the kettles to be hung.

The traveller must, indeed, have been fastidious who could have been dissatisfied with these arrangements, or thought that the state had not done enough in providing this refuge for strangers. At the time, I recollect, I was most thankful, and felt delighted at finding that we had picked up several companions who intended to halt at the same place. These were Laplanders and Finlanders, journeying, like us, to the coast, and accoutred in the same way. There lay a good deal of snow about the floor of the room, but there was little danger of its thawing, as, notwithstanding a large fire which was speedily made with brushwood collected in the neighbourhood, the thermometer showed more than fifteen degrees of cold of Reaumur.

When the company had sat down round the

blaze, the kettles were brought out, and frozen reindeer's meat chopped up, and partially thawed. A very substantial meal of meat and broth was soon prepared, and several long pulls at the brandy-bottles took off the chill from the party. They soon became very talkative, and the only thing I had to regret was not being able to enter into conversation with them. I had brought a bottle of port wine from Tornea, and it had hitherto escaped unhurt amid the perils of all kinds that had threatened it. The moment was now arrived when its strengthening powers were to be put to the test, but, alas, it cracked just as I had succeeded in thawing it, and my companions and I were obliged to substitute snow-water, out of a greasy wooden ladle that had served for baling out the Wapphus's broth.

As for the reindeer, they were left to pick up the moss in the neighbourhood, their owners only taking the precaution to leave the halter

and trace on them. Beyond this, they gave no more trouble than if they had not existed, and the guides returned to the "gamma," where they did ample justice to their fare. It has been remarked that the Greenlanders can devour an extraordinary quantity of food at a sitting, and their brethren, the Laplanders, who resemble them, in other respects, probably do not yield the palm to them in this. Before drinking they took the precaution of warming, or at least taking the chill off their corn brandy in a saucepan, a practice which I have since observed to be much in use among them. The addition of pipes and tobacco put them into particularly good humour, and doubtless much wit was bandied about, for laughing became the order of the day.

Now that the cravings of hunger were appeased, and each had wedged in his body so as to have a sight of the fire, we became sensible of one inconvenience which, however grave, had as yet

been unnoticed. The fresh fuel collected in the neighbourhood caused a most awful smoke. Every part of the gamma was filled with it, and it was impossible to sit in comfort ; as for standing up, it was out of the question, as there was immediate danger of being stifled. Once or twice I was obliged to rush out into the open air, but was soon driven back to the hut by the bitterness of the cold.

Nothing, however, could inconvenience the natives, and gradually the labours of the day, aided by their potations, sent them to sleep. The group was curious, and I never saw a heap of human bodies jumbled together in such glorious confusion. As the area of the gamma, unoccupied by the embers, was far from sufficient for the number who required a place, many lay with others piled on their legs, and with their faces within a very few inches of the fire. My companion showed no inclination to talk, and finding by the snoring that every one had betaken himself to sleep, I followed the

example of the rest, and soon forgot the troubles of the day.

When I awoke, the fire was out, and the remains of last night's supper frozen hard in the kettles. My limbs were stiff with cold, and ached from the uncomfortable position in which I had passed the night. By the light that came through the hole in the roof, I perceived the day must have been far advanced, and some indications of preparing for departure were apparent. The interior of the room was now visible, and the light did not improve my ideas of the comforts of the place. The whole of the ground round the fire was covered with snow, and icicles hung from the roof. Some time was spent in settling who should go in search of the cattle, as no one seemed inclined to leave their breakfast. At last the youngest of the party fastened on his long snow-shoes, and in a few minutes after was scarcely visible, sliding in the distance.

The weather had hitherto been fine, though

intensely cold, and we were lucky in being able to leave the Gamma so soon. Travellers are often detained there three or four days by a sudden fall of snow, or a violent head-wind. Not unfrequently, when overtaken by a storm, they are unable to reach this or any other refuge, and are obliged to bury themselves in the snow, and remain thus imbedded till the return of moderate weather. The pulkas are piled on the weather side, and with this slight shelter they contrive to defend themselves against the cold, and wait in comparative warmth till they can proceed.

Near Sollivara is the highest point in the pass between Koutokeino and the sea. A beautiful scene now opened to the sight, and lofty mountains towered in the distance, presenting various fantastic forms. As the descent is far more precipitous on this side than on the southern that slopes gradually to Tornea, it was considered advisable to fasten the spare

reindeer to the sterns of our sledges, that they might act as drags and prevent the pulkas outstripping the animals attached ahead of them; an evolution which constantly takes place where the snow is hard, and the track runs obliquely down the mountains. Not even the most expert driver can always prevent this ridiculous exhibition; and serious accidents might happen in this part of the way by the sledges being carried down precipices, were not the precaution of the second deer resorted to. As soon as we reached the bottom we found a difference in the vegetation, that could be scarcely expected. Instead of the slight bushes near Koutokeino, we found ourselves in a thickly-wooded valley and a pleasanter temperature than we had felt since leaving Tornea. The rapidity of the descent seemed to have instilled fresh vigour into the reindeer, and they flew along, regardless of such obstacles as trees or rocks. Nothing could check them; but as we drove madly for-

ward, however, my deer nearly killed me by starting at a fir-tree and bounding forward. The pulka was dashed against the trunk, and any thing constructed less substantially must have been broken to pieces. Luckily the trace broke, the animal bounded off, and I narrowly escaped having all the remaining reindeer and their sledges pass over my shoulders.

The accident was soon repaired, and we galloped on till we came to a ravine completely sheltered by a vast ridge of rocks, and filled with trees larger than I had met with since leaving Muonio Niska. We here stopped to rest the cattle, and give them an opportunity of making up for the scanty feed they had had in the mountains the preceding day. My companion and I were in hopes that the halt would not have exceeded a couple of hours' duration, and that, as we were not more than twenty miles from the coast, we should be able to reach Alten Gaard in the night. The Laplanders, however,

were of a different opinion, and declared that it was impossible to advance for the next twelve hours, as their beasts were starving. Every inducement was resorted to in vain, and the only one of the party who understood Norwegian, answered all my remonstrances by saying, "Father, we will be there to-morrow." There was no alternative but to prepare for a second night in the same agreeable company, and, by way of variety, we lay this one in the open air. There was, indeed, a small gamma in the neighbourhood, but it was considered inexpedient to make use of it, as it was in a very dilapidated state. Several buildings that have been erected by the government for the same purpose, have been rendered useless by travellers burning the doors and posts, to save themselves the trouble of cutting down wood at a short distance from them.

The place selected for the halt was under a rock, which screened us from the wind;

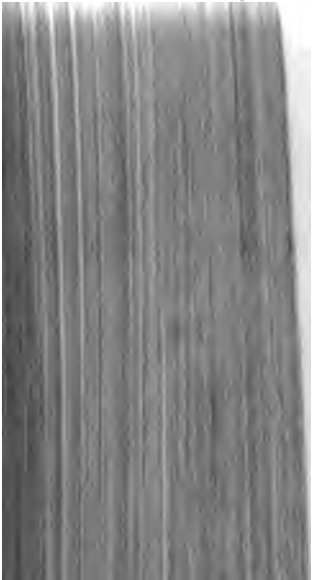
when the snow had been scooped away from the bottom of it, and thrown up in the form of a rampart, we found that the place was far from uncomfortable. Half a dozen small trees were soon felled and split ; a glorious fire was lighted, and the provisions produced and devoured with the same avidity that had been displayed at Sollivara. When the supper was concluded, a few additional logs were thrown on the fire, and the Laplanders betook themselves to sleep on the snow. The night was beautiful, one of those still moments when the aurora-borealis takes the place of the moon, and covers the sky with one sheet of variegated light. When we awoke again the fire was out, the remains of the soup was a frozen mass, and the slumbers of the Laplanders were so like those of the seven sleepers, that we despaired of rousing them to rekindle the fire. By chance we found the axes that had been so vigorously used the night before, and, with their help, brought down some

fresh fuel; it was long, however, before we could prepare our breakfast of meat, and, when it was ready, we were trotting down the river Alten.

CHAPTER XII.

Bosekope—Kaaftord copper-mine—Anecdote of a Laplander and a bear—Reindeer cheese and milk—Æstrus Tarandi—The pastor of Koutokeino—A Lapland beauty.

WE had lost sight of the sun while at Munio Niska, but had had a peep at him shortly before coming to Koutokeino, which is very elevated. He had also been visible from Solli-
vara at twelve o'clock; but now that we had descended the northern side of the mountains, not even his rays were visible. The nights,



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the poor animals struggle over the slippery surface. As we approached the Alten Fiord, the banks rose in height, and confined the river between vast rocks. At last the sea appeared; unfettered by frost, and presenting, from the contrast of the surrounding shores, a colour as black as ink. We passed many houses that bore a more comfortable appearance than those of Koutokeino; they belonged to Quæner, who have settled in the neighbourhood, and keep cattle. We here shook off our companions, and proceeded alone to the head of the Fiord. Behind a large projecting rock, "a handelsted," or trading-place, called Bosekope, has been established.

The sight of a civilized habitation was most cheering to us, and we hurried our beasts towards it. There were evident signs of a road, though it lay far beneath us; an avenue, at least, was visible. Before long we were snugly ensconced in the house of Madame Dorethy

Klerk, having had our last roll down an icy hill a few yards from it. Madame Klerk has the monopoly of Bosekope; during the time that Norway belonged to Denmark, the king possessed the exclusive right of trade in many harbours, as he also did in Iceland, and does now in the Feroe Islands and Greenland. In Norway it appears that these rights were sold to individuals, and Alten Gaard, among others, changed masters, and eventually came into the hands of the merchant, whose widow now lives there. The possession is, however, not without a condition. The owner of Bosekope is bound to keep the inn, and to find accommodation for all travellers. The duty is, of course, not very onerous; in many cases I should think it agreeable, as the arrival of a stranger in such a remote quarter must form an epoch.

Being on the coast, every thing that we wanted was to be had; a warm clean room, and a change from the Lapland habiliments to

European attire, soon restored us completely, and we descended into the sitting-room. We here found the mistress of the house and her daughter, and a young doctor and his wife from Christiania, who had been sent down by the government to superintend an hospital for lepers. As it was only ten o'clock when we arrived, it was not too late to make a hearty breakfast, and a table ready laid out presented variety enough, and would have tempted appetites that had not been sharpened by the keen air of the mountains.

The house is two stories high, and overlooks a long bay, surrounded with mountains, at the mouth of which the little town of Hammerfest is situated on one island. From Alten to the North Cape, in the Isle of Mageroe, the distance is traversed by water, and is about fourteen Norse miles. Nord Kung, near Wardoe Hus, more to the east, used to be considered the most northern point; yet, though the difference of

latitude is trifling, it is now allowed to be in favour of the North Cape. The island of Mageroe is inhabited by a Laplander who has a hut a mile and a half from the most northern headland. In winter, the approach to it is impossible, as there is much ice about it, and the inlets that connect it with the mainland are exposed to all the fury of the icy sea from Spitzbergen. At no season, even in summer, can the time required for the journey be fixed. I have heard of a person being six weeks on his return to Hammerfest, when only seven Norse miles from it. Having, therefore, crossed the whole of Lapland, I was satisfied with limiting my journey to the seventieth degree. My companion, however, determined to pass the remainder of the winter at Hammerfest, and, after seeing the North Cape, to take the first opportunity of proceeding to Spitzbergen with one of the vessels employed in the catching of walrus.

In the mean time we received an invitation

from some of our countrymen, the directors of a copper-mine at Kaafiord, an inlet on the opposite side of the bay. We accordingly embarked in a large open boat, rigged in the old Norse fashion, with the mast loose, and a single lug-sail. It was the 26th of January, yet no ice whatever was visible in the bay. The coldness of the weather, however, was apparent from the steam that rose like smoke from the water. We passed several "gammer," or huts, of the fishing Laplanders; they are miserable hovels, not lofty enough for the inmates to stand up in them, and more filthy than the tents of the mountaineers. As we sailed into the inlet, we found ourselves enclosed within lofty rocks, and came to a patch of level ground, where we landed. This piece extends a good way in the rear, and contains the copper-works and the dwellings of the miners, who we were told amounted to eleven hundred. On our way to the manager's house, we passed a small church

built of timber, used by the people in the employment of the company. It is a neat Gothic edifice, surrounded by a cemetery where the Finn, the Norwegian, and the Swede find a common resting-place. Fourteen years back, this spot was uninhabited; it now presents the agreeable spectacle of an industrious community, located in buildings far better than those in the surrounding country, and exhibiting no sign of want.

The ore is taken out of the sides of the mountains, and thus is easily conveyed by small tramways to the smelting-houses. I observed many Finnish women among the labourers, and was told that they were by no means the most unprofitable work-people. Having spent a very pleasant evening with the directors, we returned next day to Bosekope. On our way, we went into the mine, and saw the various processes that were going on in the smelting-house. There were few Englishmen; those employed

being chiefly the overseers and head men. The extremity of the frith was frozen hard, but not so far as to prevent our landing in a convenient place. On our way across the Alten fiord, we passed the clergyman of Koutokeino in a much smaller boat than our own, and even more rudely rigged.

The time ran so agreeably at Bosekope, that I should have been happy to have spent some more time there; and had I not determined to be back in Stockholm early in the spring, I would have felt inclined to remain a month longer. The weather was far milder than at Muonio Niska; indeed I cannot say that it was disagreeably cold. The severest blasts are here from the south, and as long as the wind does not come down from the mountains the temperature is very bearable. The evenings did not appear very long, being enlivened by the company of the Foged of West Finmark, who lives in the neighbourhood, and Madame Klerk's son, and

two or three young men who came over from Kaaifiord ; so that for a time there was nothing to fear on the score of *ennui*. The life of the Norwegian Finmarkers is by no means so hard as from the position of their country it would be supposed to be. On the contrary, the easy merchant spends his time rather luxuriously ; the weather may be occasionally bad, but that will give an opportunity of enjoying his comfortable stove, and at that time there will be little to require his attention out of doors. They are of a lively disposition, and, when they meet together, the smallness of their parties is made up for by the hilarity that reigns in them.

I saw several of the coast Laplanders while at Alten, and they struck me as a wretched set of men, for the fur clothes of their brethren of the mountains increase their size beyond what it really is. I was told, while here, that they have a superstitious belief that the bear understands their language.

An anecdote illustrative of it was told me at Bosekope by a trader. Two Laplanders, while hunting, unexpectedly met a bear; Bruin was of very respectable dimensions, sufficient to strike terror into the hearts of both heroes. The one took to his heels, and left the other to settle affairs as he might best with the "old man in the hairy coat." The latter gentleman rose on his legs and began to lavish his endearments on the remaining man, and to paw him rather uncereemoniously, at which he called out to the bear, "Are you not ashamed to hurt your countryman?" The bear, feeling no doubt the incivility of his conduct, gave a growl and left him. "Did you speak to him in Norwegian?" inquired the trader, "No! in Laponic to be sure;" answered the other, "else how would he have understood what I said to him?"

After a short stay at Bosekope, I again turned my face to the southward, and left Alten; but through the slippery tricks of the men who

had brought us from Koutokeino, I was very nearly left behind to wait till a fresh supply of reindeer could be sent from that place, for none are to be found nearer to Alten-Gaard. These worthies, while under the persuasion of brandy, had been most lavish of their promises, and agreed to take me back again. They, however, very soon lost all recollection of their engagements, and let out their reindeer to somebody else. Remonstrance was of no use: they only contradicted one another every time they spoke, and asked for more brandy. The elder of the two, a man seventy-six years of age, who had accompanied King Louis Philippe to the North Cape, was a particularly difficult man to deal with, and shifted his ground a dozen times in the arguments, yet his appearance was so ludicrous that it was impossible to be angry with him. The pastor of Koutokeino here stepped in, and kindly offered to lend me one of his own deer, and, as I had but little luggage,

he found a man who agreed to take it with his own. Indeed, my chief desire to start at that time arose from a wish to avail myself of the company of the clergyman across the mountains.

He was a Norwegian of much information, and very partial to every thing English. As all ecclesiastical benefices are in the gift of the government in Norway, the younger clergymen are first appointed to the most remote livings, and after some six or seven years' residence in these hyperborean regions, are transferred to other parishes more desirable in point of climate. Some parishes, however, are not so bad in regard to revenue. The living of Talvick, in which Kaafiord is situated, produces, in years when the fishery succeeds, about three thousand specie dollars, equivalent to six hundred pounds a year. My new acquaintance had begun his career by the lowest step of the ladder, for his parish is the most northern in the world. Hap-

pening to ask him, whether he did not find his duty very laborious, "My parish," said he, "is probably larger than many German principalities. The North Cape and Koutokeino, which are 240 miles apart, are both within its limits ; my life resembles much that of a skipper, for I am more than half the year away from my family, travelling over deserts, and living amongst half-savages." Yet, with all these disadvantages, he seemed a contented, and was certainly a very good-humoured gentleman.

All our arrangements having been made, we got under way, accompanied by a host of Finlanders, who were returning from Hammerfest to different parts of North Bothnia. The presence of two or three Norwegians I found peculiarly useful in awakening the dormant energies of the Laplanders, who now became far more expeditious in their movements than on the way to the North. We remounted the river Alten, and without making a halt at the scene of the

former bivouac, we began the ascent of the mountains on foot. The delays of starting had been so many, that before we left the river night had set in. At first we allowed our beasts to follow each other in Indian file, till one of the Laplanders marked that we had crossed the track of a wolf. On the alarm being given, every one rushed forward and recovered hold of his reindeer, for the appearance or even scent of a single wolf would have been sufficient to put the whole caravan into confusion. The night was still, and the aurora borealis lighted up the whole expanse of the sky, but it is doubtful whether it would have been possible to prevent their total dispersion; and the recovery of the frightened animals that night would have been very problematical, as there was nothing to confine them in any direction but ravines.

I continued my walk by the side of the priest, who proved an amusing companion, and did not limit his conversation to any particular subject.

Among other things, he talked about Childe Harold, which he had read in the original. It was not exactly a place to discuss the beauties of that poem, yet he astonished me more by a query, which I must leave to better judges to decide—no less than, whether Madame Vestris's legs deserved the praise that had been bestowed on them! With that, and other more serious conversation about the British and Norwegian constitutions, a source of continual comparisons in his country, we beguiled our way till we again entered our sledges, and about the middle of the night arrived at the gamma, at Sol-livara.

Owing to the kindness of my countrymen at Kaafiord, my provision-bag was in better condition than on my former visit to the hut. A small keg of rum that I had procured at Alten made the rounds of the civilized part of the company, and a bottle of brandywine, which I intrusted to the care of a Laplander, was

warmed, and speedily tossed off by him and his mates. A valuable addition to my stock was some reindeer cheese, which, from its richness, seldom freezes, and forms a most substantial meal. It is also most useful when burnt, and applied to a frostbitten part, for it prevents the cold entering farther into the flesh. The cheeses are made in circular cakes, an inch thick; they are semi-transparent, and have but little flavour. Reindeer milk I have also occasionally eaten, from curiosity more than preference, and have found it so greasy as to be almost like melted butter. On their journies, the Laplanders generally carry a supply of it frozen, in a bladder, and break off pieces as they want it.

Shortly after we had halted, it was discovered that two of the reindeer, belonging to a poor man from Koutokeino, were so exhausted as to leave no hope of their recovery; and, as was expected, they died within an hour. Sixty miles a day continued for three or four, has generally been

considered the utmost trial that their exertions can be put to. After a journey of that length, the Laplanders, who have a herd to pick from, rarely use the same deer again that winter. In the present instance they had been hard driven from Koutokeino to Alten, and had scarcely had any rest before they set out on their return. The owner was not satisfied with what the Norwegian offered him for waiting till he should return himself, and induced by the love of company, had immediately followed us, and had not spared his cattle, which were in very poor condition.

The average life of the reindeer is about sixteen years, an age at which few arrive, as they are fattened and killed when they begin to fall off in speed; many that I have driven, and found very good, were thirteen and fourteen years old. The Laplanders, in many parts, dislike selling them alive to the Swedes, and insist on slaughtering them themselves in their

own way. This they do by striking them in the breast with a small sharp-pointed knife, which they leave in the wound, thereby preventing any external effusion of blood. The stricken deer is left loose, and after trembling a few seconds falls down dead. The carcass is then opened, and the blood collected in the chest is taken out for use.

It is only during winter that these animals enjoy any comfort, as even moderate cold is insufficient for their nature. The great heat of their northern summer subjects them to much pain, and brings with it their special plague in the form of a gadfly (*æstrus tarandi*). Linnæus, in his *Flora Lapponica*, describes the mode in which this insect tortures the reindeer. About the beginning of July the latter shed their coats, at which time the hair on the back is erect. The *æstrus* flutters the whole day over the herd, and takes the opportunity of dropping on them an egg, scarcely the size of a mustard

seed. The state of the coat at this season favours its admission, and protected by the heat of the part, a larva is produced that finds its way into the flesh, and continues there the winter, increasing to the bulk of an acorn. As the warm weather comes on, it becomes restive, and worries the poor animals almost to madness. till it has eaten its way through the skin. Six or eight of these tormentors, and sometimes even more, fall to the share of each deer; the young ones, after their first winter, are most subject to their attacks, and Linnæus adds that a third or fourth part of the calves fall victims to this complaint, which is known among the inhabitants by the name of kurbma. As soon as an œstrus is observed fluttering about, the greatest confusion exhibits itself in the herd; they fly from the obnoxious insect running against the wind, and driving from them any unfortunate individual who has received the unlucky windfall. While suffering under the irritation of the gnawing,

they rush madly into the sea, and feel some relief while under water. On this account, many of the Laplanders keep near the shores of the Icy Sea during the summer, and only return to the interior about September.

The scene presented by a herd crossing a lake, or from one island to the other is curious; one or two deer are carried over in a boat with the Lapland family, and the remainder, often several hundred in number, follow swimming. The skins of a moudda that I bought at Koutokeino, which are of choice young calves, are full of the punctures of the *œstrus*, many large enough to admit the little finger through them.

The hair of the reindeer is uncommonly thick, yet very loose, and I have seen no fur that is less durable. In winter the sides of the animal acquire a grayish tinge that gives them the appearance of having been chafed. The mode used by the natives for dressing the skins is very rude; the fat is merely removed and train-

oil rubbed in, and this process makes the neighbourhood of a person clad in a moudda disagreeably perceptible to the nose in any temperature above zero.

The next morning we continued our journey, and scarcely halted before we reached the foot of the mountains. Here we rested a few hours by the side of a fire, and indulged in a warm supper *à la belle étoile*, and then moved on to Koutokeino. The last ten miles I travelled most disagreeably, as my harness became entangled, and in my endeavours to adjust it I was thrown out from the rest of the company. In some parts the river Alten is rather wide, and as the whole was covered with snow, it was not easy to find the way. My reindeer was tired, and consequently refractory; he made a thrust at me with his horns every time I tried to unravel the thong that was twisted round them. At last, finding it useless to combat his will, and being in that most dis-

agreeable state of drowsiness that is produced by cold and hunger, I left him to his own guidance, and eventually arrived at my journey's end half an hour after the rest. It is said that reindeer can hear the clattering of each other's hoofs at a great distance, and are this way guided when in the dark. The sound is very peculiar, yet they must be very sharp of hearing if they can notice it a hundred yards off. It is produced by the cloven hoofs striking each other very quickly on the foot being drawn out of the snow and contracted.

The pastor was come to Koutokeino to pay his mountain parishioners a month's visit, for the double purpose of confirming the younger portion and collecting his dues. There is some difficulty in preparing them for the former rite, as they have to be taught to read Norwegian first. This impediment will, however, be soon overcome by the labours of a Norwegian priest, who has prepared an alphabet, which includes all

the sounds that are met with in the language of the Laplanders.

The priest has a house built for him in Koutokeino, in which his predecessor lived with his family, but it is too lofty to be well warmed. After he had preached a sermon in the little wooden church I went to pay him a visit, and found him surrounded by several men and women who had come from the country around to settle their accounts with him. On this score each chief of a family pays yearly one haunch and shoulder, with the skin, tongue, and suet of a reindeer, besides fees for baptism and marriage. As each individual laid his offering at the feet of the clergyman, he was presented with a dram, and I marked that the women were those who objected least to this part of the proceeding.

While I was waiting a couple came to be betrothed; a form which, when gone through before a clergyman, has almost the validity of

a marriage ; at least, neither party can contract a new engagement, without a divorce. The damsel's charms were somewhat lessened by a squint of a most determined kind. I at once made up my mind that she must be wealthy, and pondered what sized herd could compensate for her obliquity of vision. I was, however, mistaken, for the worthy schoolmaster, in answer to my inquiries, laconically answered " Not much reindeer."

After staying a few days at Koutokeino, I procured a fresh Wapphus, and drove in a south-westerly direction, intending to return by Kallisovando. The country I now travelled over, though mountainous, was far superior to the part I came from. The bushes began to have the appearance of trees, and afford some shelter from the wind. As yet birch alone was to be seen, yet the elegant form of that tree, incrustated with ice, did not make me regret the absence of the never-varying fir, which gives monotony to the country farther south.

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Not speaking any thing but her native language, she spared me the witchery of her tongue ; but, seeing my raw victuals, she brought me a small fryingpan and wooden ladle, taking the precaution to lick the latter by way of ridding it of grease. As the savoury smell of the thawing meat became perceptible, a dozen half-starved dogs, somewhat like those of the Esquimaux, crowded round me, and eyed me and my food alternately. A battle ensued for the remains, and each showed so much voracity, and seemed so unused to eating, that it became doubtful whether they would not devour one another by mistake. In the mean time the deer were supplied with moss collected and stacked for winter use by the people. When they were refreshed, I put a silver coin into the hand of the dame, which brought a horrible grin on her features, and I bade her adieu.


It was now midnight, and the following

evening I was at the house of Pastor Listadius, of Kallisovando. Finding I could now proceed with horses, I discharged the Wapphus, and determined to exchange my pulka for a Finnish sledge.

Pastor Listadius was away from home when I arrived at Kallisovando;* his wife, however, who was the only individual who spoke Swedish, asked me to stay a short time and take some dinner before I moved on. The clergyman's house is the only one at the place, but it is com-

their coming to it, they had been as many years in a living in Lulea Lapmark, on a spot even more removed from the occasional track of strangers than Kallisovando. It appears, however, that being an ardent botanist and entomologist, the pastor does not feel the seclusion of the situation as much as might be expected, and by long custom has become attached to this part of the country. This shows how far the force of habit can overcome every thing in this world, for a more dreary spot to be condemned to live in, I should think no easy task to find. In Iceland the clergy are, in many respects, no better situated, yet their neighbours are of the same race as themselves, and intelligent ; here Laplanders must form the class with which the clergyman must be in constant communication, and a more disagreeable set of parishioners I cannot well imagine.

In such a location, the income of the pastor ought to be proportionably great, in some way to compensate for the dreadful climate ; yet I



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with a horse and sledge similar to the one I had left in Muonio Niska. I could now sleep at my ease, while a stout Finlander drove me along the rivers, and, in the course of seventy miles, met with three houses, at which I changed horses. At one place, called Pallajocki, a little Laplander, upon the strength of understanding a few words of Swedish, insisted upon talking to me, chiefly in his own tongue; and it was ridiculous to mark what airs the man of two languages gave himself. With some difficulty I got rid of this intruder; not, however, before I had threatened him very intelligibly with a forcible ejection.

About the middle of next day I passed Muonio Niska, and, resuming my own sledge, moved on to Happaranda; as I proceeded to the southward every mile lengthened the day, and, on approaching Tornea, was particularly struck at the great length of twilight in the north. The sun was on the point of setting as

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that I had passed before in December, and, having nothing to detain me, travelled day and night. The cold was much greater; yet there had fallen but little snow. In the neighbourhood of Skelleftea, I met with herds of reindeer that had come down from the Lulea mountains for the winter. These incursions are not much relished by the Swedish peasant, who finds his land overrun with deer and not greatly improved by them. Farther to the south, I passed a few straggling Laplanders, but all appearing far poorer than those in the north. At last, after eight days and nights of incessant travelling, I entered Stockholm, having gone over two thousand seven hundred miles. The journey itself, though performed in the depth of winter, and in a most wild country, had possessed so many charms from its novelty, that I had never felt any fatigue; but, as I approached the capital, I found that if the cold was not so great I was at least more sensitive of it. Near

Upsala, one of my cheeks was entirely frost-bitten, and but for timely notice from the man who accompanied me the part might have mortified. For some months after my return to England, the spot most affected retained marks of chill, and remained, externally, perfectly white. To protect the nose is even more difficult, as the breath proceeding from it forms large icicles that add to the cold.

Stockholm presented a far more lively scene than when I had left it. The dull rainy wea-

carlian, make the winter costume even more diversified than the brighter hues worn in summer.

During that season the place outside the town most frequented for walking and driving is the royal park of Djur Garden, situated in an island in sight of Stockholm. Close to it are the buildings in which the gun-boats are housed, ready to be launched at a moment's warning. The entry is further protected from the sea by the Castle of Waxholm, a few miles from the town on the Salt Lake. Djur Garden has many attractions in the shape of a theatre and circus for horsemanship, pretty drives and walks, and, not the least, are the guinguettes that border the road along it nearest Stockholm. These places on Sundays are crowded, and have a very gay appearance. A curious custom prevails here for the attendants, who are all females, to wear a peculiar head-dress in shape of a very diminutive skull-cap, to which are attached ornaments like the wings of a butterfly.



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these an inclined plane, covered with blocks of ice, is run down at an angle of forty-five; and the speed with which the descent is begun is so great, that the cars are carried, without stopping, along the track to the opposite scaffolding.

CHAPTE

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their ancient superstitions. Even in the most civilized countries, eighteen centuries have not sufficed to eradicate from the lower classes notions and superstitions that existed in the times of heathenism.

It is therefore a matter of no wonder that these people, who at best can but be imperfectly acquainted with even the outward forms of the new religion, should have retained and amalgamated with them many of the symbols of the old. This corruption, of course, must be found in a less degree in a Lutheran country than among those who belong to Russia, and border on the Asiatic tribes, that are downright pagans. Still, even in the Lapmarks, there is a belief in certain demons, whom the natives fancy wander among the mountains and lakes, and to whom they attribute the power of doing harm or good, and possessing great influence at stated times, such as Christmas.

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appearance, aided by their uncouth habiliments, were calculated to connect them in the minds of the ignorant with unearthly beings.

Throughout the northern mythology, the terrible is made to dwell in extremes, dwarfs are represented as powerful as giants, and the Laplanders being little known, easily acquired a reputation in a science which is most respected when least looked into. John Scheffer, an old author who writes in Latin, enters largely into their mythology, and to his history of Lapland I am chiefly indebted for what follows. His account is interspersed with quotations in Icelandic and Swedish, many of which are rendered rather obscure by the spelling, and by the antiquity of the terms. Tornæus is one of his chief authorities.

By all accounts, their most ancient god was Jumala, supposed to have been the Supreme Deity of the Skritt Finner. It was probably another name for Thoron, whom they worshipped in conjunction with two others, Stor-

junkare and Baive. This last god is supposed to be either the sun or fire, and was not represented by any figure. Thoron and Storjunkare are evidently names of Swedish extraction, and belong to the same idols as Ajeka, or great grandfather, and Stourra Passe, which signifies holy and great. Their images were called by the Laplanders "Seite," and varied in material according to the god, Ajeka's always being of wood, and Stourra Passe being represented under the figure of a stone.

the hatchet completed the divinity, and he must, when accoutred, have displayed a most ludicrous appearance. Savages generally suppose that their gods have the same wants as themselves, and the Laplanders, to provide theirs with every comfort, drove a steel nail with a small flint into Ajeka's head, that he might strike a light whenever it pleased him to smoke. Behind him, and round the edge of the table, the horns of the deer that had been sacrificed to him were arranged in heaps, and immediately in front was placed a box filled with small pieces of flesh taken from every part of the victim, with grease melted over them.

Stourra Passe, the next deity, was supposed to preside over beasts and fishes, and may be considered a household god, for every family had an idol of him peculiar to itself, preserved either on some rock, or near a marsh. His figure was a rough stone, found in the mountains, and accidentally bearing some remote

likeness to a head. The Laplanders supposed such a stone to have been expressly fashioned by the god, that he might be worshipped under its form. It was raised on a little mound, and other smaller ones, found afterwards, were ranged around it. These last represented his family; the next largest to himself was called his wife, the third his son or daughter, and the rest his servants. To complete the whole, a semicircle of horns of male reindeer was formed

by rapids, and almost inaccessible from the rocks and eddies in the stream. In this place, they had been told, the people of the province formerly offered sacrifices to a "Seita," or idol. On approaching the altar, they found a great heap of reindeers' horns, and the idols themselves behind them. The largest stone resembled nothing human, and seemed to have acquired its shape solely from the rush of the water. It was very greasy from a quantity of fat and blood that had been smeared over it. To the right of it four , smaller stones were ranged in a line, and were pointed out to Regnard, by his native guides, as the wife, children, and servants of the Seita.

He also remarked, that all the stones, and particularly the largest, were laid on fresh birch twigs, and close by lay several square staves marked with some rude characters. The thickest and longest of these, he was told, was the staff which the Seita made use of on his journeys. This particular spot was noticed by Tornæus as a place of sacrifice, and he adds,

that in his time it was no longer frequented; yet the marks of the blood that seemed recent, and the freshness of the leaves still adhering to the birch twigs, left no doubt on the minds either of Regnard or his companions that the Laplanders still worshipped idols in secret, though nominally Christians. The guides did not even deny the fact, but were unwilling to give further information on the subject to the travellers. That they believed in the power of the Seita was plainly evinced by their alarm, when Regnard attempted to carry away the stones. They expressed great dread of the vengeance of the offended god, and their fears were much relieved when they found that Regnard desisted from his intended spoliation, which the weight and greasiness of the whole family made rather difficult.

Their sacrifices were generally made at the fall of the year, and none but men were allowed to officiate, or even be present at them. At the same time they usually erected a new statue

to Ajeka, who was allowed one every year. Before proceeding further they prudently examined, by means of their magic drum, whether the deer intended to be sacrificed would prove acceptable to the deity. The solution of this doubt was obtained by fastening to one of their magic rings a few hairs stripped from the neck of the victim, and laying them on the drum-head, which was then beaten by one of the party. If the ring from the concussion should turn about and point to the figure of the deity which was to be propitiated, it was considered an infallible sign that he was well pleased with the oblation. But if it remained motionless, notwithstanding the agitation of the drum, they presented it to some other god, and renewed the ceremony and said another prayer.

There was little difference in the mode of sacrificing to Ajeka, or Stourra Passe. In both cases, the presentation of the horns, and the smearing the idol with fresh blood was the

leading feature ; but as the second deity sometimes preferred taking up his residence in mountains and crags that were too steep to be easy of access, in such cases, his votaries offered the victim at the foot, and afterwards threw a stone dipped in the blood as far in the direction of the top of the mountain as they could. By this ceremony they imagined that they had fully acquitted themselves of the duty they owed to the Stourra Passe of the place. They also ranged young pine and birch branches

The spots where these idols were fixed were called "passe vari," or holy mountains, many of which retain that name. Samuel Rheen enumerates thirty places of the kind in Lulea Lapmark, and considers them not the only ones in the district. They do not appear to have had any priests. The person who proposed making the sacrifice consulted the drum himself, and cried out, "Maiide Siœl kak tun Stourra Passe siede?"—(What sayest thou, great and holy god, wilt thou accept the victim?) Reindeer were the principal offerings among the Laplanders; yet, in the district of Lulea, dogs and cats were sometimes added. .

Divine honours were paid to the sun and to the spirits of the dead whom the Laplanders call Sites, but neither were represented under any image. The victims were distinguished by a white thread passed through the right ear when devoted to Baive, and a string of black wool was substituted when the manes were to be propitiated. In most cases, it appears, that

a part of the offered deer was devoured by the worshippers; sometimes it was buried; but little seems ever to have been given up to the idols beyond bones and horns, and occasionally a small portion of the lights.

Besides the Sites, they believed in aerial spirits, and paid them a sort of adoration. Scheffer supposed this part of their religion to have arisen from the divine host that announced the birth of our Saviour to the shepherds. At Christmas time they were supposed to be most numerous,

of the idolatrous tribes in the northern part of Asiatic Russia, to whom they are evidently related in blood. We now come to their magic and sorcery. Saxo Grammaticus, in the eighth book of his Danish History, refers to Lapland under the latinized name of Bjarmia. This term would appear to designate Finmark, where the most northern Skritt Finner had their abode. It was a country terrible, not only by the natural rigour of the climate, but also rendered perilous to approach on account of the magicians who filled the land with unearthly sights, and whose charms were most powerful. He describes minutely the perils that one Thorkill and his companions went through in penetrating into this country of sorcerers. On every side frightful spectres and demons appeared ; inanimate objects became endowed with activity and attacked them ; the most determined resistance availed them but little against these supernatural agents, and the chief returned with scarce twenty of his crew. In a later part of the same

book, he speaks of their rebelling against the the hero of northern antiquity, Regner Lodbrog, who, after vanquishing the finest troops in Europe, found it less easy to keep the dwarfs of Lapland in subjection. "By their spells," he says, "they stopped the ships of the Danes while sailing with a fair wind, and annoyed them by alternately tormenting them with the extremes of heat and cold, and raising storms that no human skill could baffle."

Their sale of winds to mariners is generally known, and afforded some profit to those who lived along the coast of the Icy Sea. The charm that ensured the fair wind was contained in a rope with three knots. As soon as the first was untied, the purchaser might expect a slight breeze; on unravelling the second, the wind was to freshen; but if he ventured to undo the third, a gale would come on and increase into a hurricane of such violence that the ship would be inevitably lost. The power to grant a particular wind was supposed

to depend entirely on the nativity of the sorcerer. He had, it was said, absolute power over the wind that blew at the moment of his birth, and thus one was called the lord of the east wind, another of the west, and so on.

That which they principally depended upon in their magical mummeries was a drum, called amongst them "kannus," or "quobdas," a bunch of rings, called "arpa," and a hammer that served as a drumstick. One of these drums is still preserved in the Cabinet of Curiosities, in Copenhagen. The material used in their construction was the trunk of a pine or birch tree, which bent in such a way that every fibre leant from right to left, as its growth was supposed to have some mysterious connexion with the course of the sun.

The drum was made of one entire piece, the tree being cleft asunder, and hollowed out in the middle so as to resemble a bowl. The flat or upper part was covered with skin; the convex side had two holes cut in it, and the space

between served as a handle. The rim upon which the skin was stretched, was not exactly circular, but nearly an oval. They were, in fact, small oblong kettle-drums. On the drum-head were painted several figures in red, which represented their gods, our Saviour, the Apostles, and the animals they were acquainted with. The signs painted on the drums varied, probably according to the occasion on which they were used. In Sheffer's description of Lapland, he gives specimens of several; he mentions his

probably only for divination and the recovery of lost things. The surface of the drum-head is divided off into three principal parts; the first is Norland, in Sweden, and is represented on that side which is turned to the south, and contains that town and the road to it in which the owner trades; the Laplanders of Tornea Lapmark had the town of Tornea marked in theirs. To the north, Norway with its inhabitants is represented. The middle and largest portion of the drum-head stands for Lapland, and in it are painted herds of deer, wolves, bears, and also kinds of animals.

The hammer with which this drum was struck was generally made of reindeer's horn, about the thickness of a man's little finger. The other instrument, without which the apparatus would have been incomplete, was the "Arpa." It was the mark that pointed out the answers to their inquiries.

It was a large, copper or silver ring, with other

smaller ones attached to it in a variety of fashions. One of those represented is a thick plate, perforated in the middle, and surrounded with small chains. The other is a ring with a circular plate attached to it by little brass bands. In the use of the drum, the magician was not so solicitous about producing a great noise, as about the motion of the Arpa, and the position they took on the hieroglyphics painted on the skin.

No woman was allowed to touch a magic drum; if she should go along the path by which it had passed within three days, some heavy calamity was expected to fall on her. Most people had one for their particular use; but, upon occasions of importance, a sorcerer of known power was consulted. During the ceremony, the operator and all those present remained on their knees. The sorcerer took the drum by the handle, and laid the ring on the part where the sun was delineated. He then struck the drum with his hammer, and sung a

song called, in their language, "Jorke," the rest of the company joining in chorus. As the song proceeds, the violence of the singing and drumming increase. At last he raises it above his head, and drops down like one in a trance, and his soul is supposed to have abandoned his body, and conveyed itself to the country from which intelligence is required. Meanwhile, the whole party keep up a chorus, and watch, lest any thing should disturb him. Not a fly is allowed to approach him, lest he should die from the effects of being roused before the proper time. When he recovers his senses, he gives the required information. John Scheffer, who is rather credulous, gives an instance of lucky divination in a Laplander, which, he says, is well attested.

One John Delling, the servant of a German merchant, was waiting in Bergen for his master, who was in his native country. Some mountain Finns being in the town, he had the curiosity to consult them as to what his master was doing

at the time. They went through the usual farce of the drum, and their answer was written down at the time in the book of the merchants of Bergen. When the master came to Bergen, the account he gave of himself agreed with what the wizard had said.

The same course was adopted to discover the cause and result of their ailings. If the rings moved from left to right, it was looked upon as a propitious omen ; but if they turned in a contrary direction, it portended misfortunes and dis-

human beings to the altar ; and Stourra Passe, surrounded by his wife and children, was far more harmless than the Thor of the Goths.

It was not my fortune to meet in Lapland with any one who pretended to any power in sorcery ; some, I have heard, are to be found who extort an occasional glass of brandy from their weaker neighbours, by a threat of bringing misfortunes on their herd, and that is probably the extent of the art in the present day. I cannot, however, dismiss the subject without adding what Regnard says concerning it. While at a clergyman's house, he induced one of the natives to bring him a noted sorcerer. The latter was not very willing to display his acquirements in the forbidden art so near a priest's house ; but consented to astonish the strangers, if they should be bold enough to follow him. The Frenchmen consented, and, after going some distance into the forest, came to a miserable hut, in which he lived. He here showed them his drum and the rest of his magical ap-

paratus. Regnard wished to put his science to the test, and asked him some question concerning France. The other was nothing daunted, and prepared for the incantation.

Not satisfied with striking his drum, he beat his face and breast till he was covered with bruises, and his countenance was disfigured with perspiration and blood. By degrees he worked himself into a state bordering on phrensy, and rolled about like a maniac, unconscious of every thing. But it was all to no purpose; he found that he had got into the hands of people who were a match for him, and as he saw no other way of getting out of the scrape, he was fain to acknowledge that the devil, who was subservient to him, had never revealed to him any thing that happened beyond Stockholm. He added, that since he had advanced in years, and lost several of his teeth, he had found his power over the devil rapidly decreasing.

The same, he said, was the case with all sorcerers in Lapland, a good set of teeth being in-

dispensable for keeping the familiar spirit in proper subjection. The defeat must have been disagreeable enough. Regnard added to it by removing his drum while he was in a phrensy, and when he begged to have it returned, he was told that his art ought to come to his aid, and help him to discover the thief, and find where the stolen article was concealed.

CHAPTER XIV.

Gripsholm—Eric's dungeon—Westeras—A Lapland
giantess—Gottenburg.

THE month of March passed away without any decrease of cold, and April set in with no prospect of returning spring. Still the streets were covered with snow, and the lakes passable for sledges. The power of the sun at midday increased greatly, and caused that dazzling glare which so often produces snow-blindness in the north. The colour of the houses in Stockholm,

which are universally stuccoed and painted white, adds to this inconvenience, and it is strange that the eyesight of the inhabitants of the capital is not more generally affected ; yet, I have rarely met with blindness in Sweden, and, altogether, the people seem troubled with few corporeal infirmities, and their climate, though severe, is bracing and healthy. They say that they have two summers—the green and the white ; the first is so short that there is no time to become weary of it, and the latter can always be rendered comfortable in a country where the forests afford abundance of fuel.

As I began to fear that if I waited till the opening of the navigation my stay might be protracted to the month of June, I determined on leaving Stockholm, and taking my chance of finding snow as far as Helsingborg. Before, however, leaving the north of Sweden, I took the opportunity of the fine weather to see the castle of Gripsholm, in Södremanland ; no palace in the country possesses such interest, it

having successively been a fortress, monastery, prison, and palace, according to the genius of the various ages since the time of its first erection. When I started from Stockholm, the snow was so deep as to render the fences invisible. Passing through the little town of Södre Telje, I struck off to the westward along the southern shore of lake Mœlare, a branch of which I crossed on the ice; I then took up my quarters at Mariefred, a little town close to the castle, on the border of the lake.

The palace is painted of a bright red colour, and at the present season, when rising out of a plain of dazzling white, the contrast is almost painful to the sight. The town is one of the least even in Sweden, built entirely of wood, and offering nothing worthy of notice but the church, which boasts of a tall spire. As the day was too far advanced to think of seeing the interior of the castle the same afternoon, I sallied out on a journey of discovery through the streets; but the only result of my perambulations was meeting a solitary pig or two, wan-

dering about in full exercise of that liberty which has been granted to them from time immemorial in all towns of the caliber of Mariefred.

The spot upon which the palace is situated was originally called Ahl, and derives its present name from Bo Jonson Grip, a powerful baron, who built his castle at the end of the fourteenth century, on what was at that time a small island, or holm. The channel that divided it from the mainland has since become choked; but the surrounding ground is very low and swampy, and the approach to the castle is by a raised causeway. After his death, Bo's widow was compelled to give it up to Margaret, the Semiramis of the North. It then served as a fortress, and was garrisoned with foreign troops; during the troubles that followed, the officer that commanded abandoned it at the approach of Engelbriht, a Dalecarlian chief, having first set it on fire.

Afterwards it passed through the hands of

a king, a bishop, and the elder Sture, administrator of Sweden, who bestowed it on a Carthusian convent in the neighbourhood. The accession, however, of Gustaf Wasa, and the reformation, tore it from the possession of its new owners, and the king obtained an edict by which the castle was declared royal property. At the time of its recovery, there remained no more of the original building than the eastern tower. Being judged an eligible spot for a stronghold, it was, by its new proprietor, thrown into its present form. Gustaf the Third has also added state apartments from his own plans, and made a very convenient staircase in the thickness of the wall, which is in many places eighteen feet through.

On entering through a porch flanked by towers, we passed through two irregular courts that displayed every variety of window. As no one but a warden lives in the castle in winter, it is considered to be more convenient to wait until the return of spring melts the accumulated

snow and discharges it into the lake, than to clear it away by manual labour. A narrow path, so deep as to screen the objects on either side from any one but a giant, has been scooped out with shovels, and forms the only means of communication from one part to the other. It were impossible to name even the principal portraits preserved in the palace. A collection, amounting to fifteen hundred, and including all the kings of Sweden, and most of those of foreign countries since Gustaf Wasa's time, have been placed here. Add to these the portraits of all the great men that the country has produced, and numberless others, whose temporary popularity gained them admission there, but did not prevail so far as to procure them frames for their pictures. One large apartment is filled with the portraits of those present at the signing the treaty of Westphalia, and another is devoted to some fifty councillors, in a costume not unlike that of our judges; but of the former, the Chancellor Axel Oxenstjerna is the only one of historical

make a distinction.

Far more interest
the chamber where 3
years in confinement
afterwards had built
Eric first incarcerated
which the sequel show
his plotting against
leased him from his cor
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left at large, and the tra
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from the throne. In 14
kingdom assembled in
Stockholm, had him coi
in the palace into which

during alienation of mind. His brother John thought proper to aggravate his disgrace by questioning him further on the subject. "I never was mad but once," answered Eric, "and that was when I released you from Gripsholm." During the two following years, he was moved about from prison to prison. Fearing his brother might still have friends, John sent him to Abo in Finland ; but when there, he suspected that his own enemy, Ivan of Russia, might make an attempt in his favour, and he shifted him to the isle of Aland. Yet there he was still too near the Muscovite, and Eric was brought back to Stockholm ; whence, after preparations had been made for his safe keeping, he was carried to the castle of Gripsholm.

The two rooms remain in the same state to this day that they were in while occupied by those prisoners, and they give a very different impression of the character of the two brothers. The elder appears merely to have aimed at preventing his troublesome brother from harming

him, and, beyond mere confinement, inflicted on him no pain. He even softened the loss of his liberty by allowing him the society of his wife. John, on the other hand, wished to torture his brother, and tried every thing in his power to shorten his days by misery. His own apartment is an octagon with three recesses with windows, and an alcove and bed in the largest. Two silk arm-chairs and a stool remain, and tradition says, that they comprised the whole of the furniture; nor was it probably considered scanty in that age. On the side of the recess, opposite the alcove, is a hollow in the wall, which served for a cradle to three of his children, who were born in the room. The walls, panels, and vaulted ceiling, are richly gilt and painted; little angels and flowers are profusely scattered about, and give the place the appearance rather of a lady's boudoir than a dungeon.


Far different is the cell of Eric; on viewing the place of his punishment, the enormity of his

faults partially fades, and his brother's unnatural conduct, and not his own faults, presents itself. It is a circular room, about fifteen feet in diameter and nine high, in the smallest of the four towers. It is surrounded by a passage in which a sentry continually walked round and observed every act of the prisoner through grated openings that received a borrowed light. It was not unaptly called a cage by John, when he came to view it before the arrival of his brother, and ordered the guards to be careful that the bird did not escape. One of the windows allowed a partial view of the country through the outer one, with which it corresponds. The attention of the stranger is here called to the marks of the elbows of Eric, who generally passed his time on this spot. The outer windows were found to afford too good a view, and the lower part was walled up. A broken chair and bare brick walls without plaster were the only comforts he enjoyed there, and a triangular hole in the inner door served to

admit his meat and firing, and he was allowed but a scanty supply of either of these necessities ; for, to aggravate his confinement, he was made to endure hunger and cold. He had no glass to his windows, and a window-shutter, so rudely constructed that it scarcely kept the snow out, was his only barrier against the elements. This not being found sufficiently painful, he was aroused every quarter of an hour, till habit so far prevailed that he answered in his sleep. Eric, as has been before remarked,

an enemy to his country. Unfortunately his logic could produce no results, and as his guards were selected from among his enemies, he was insulted with impunity. One of these, Olaf Stenbock, a relative of the nobles murdered at Upsala, abused his authority so far as to attempt stripping him on a cold winter's day. Eric, driven to desperation, resisted, and the wretch fired a gun at him through the hole in the door. The unfortunate man received the charge in his arm, which was shattered, and lay extended on the floor for several hours before assistance was brought him.


It has been said that the prisons of deposed princes are seldom far from their graves ; Eric's is an exception. Happy would he have been had he suffered as sudden a death as many of his victims. He would then have escaped not only the personal sufferings which his strong constitution carried him through for near nine years ; he would have gone down to the grave without being subjected to the exquisite mental



was allowed the converse
from his queen, Karin
to him in a manner
rarely to be met with
confined, there she
he was afterwards kept
accustomed to converse
window of another floor
One day she was ordered
never return to the
time, Eric came to her
speaking to Karin; but
He called again—yet
person that had been familiar
disappeared. His mind
deeper gloom. At one

uncertainty he was left till the hour of his death.

That event was now approaching ; he seemed to become hardened by adversity ; every thing had been tried that could render life miserable, yet he still struggled against his misfortunes. Tired out by his brother's courage, and fearing that some unforeseen event might at length release him from his durance, John asked the consent of his council to put Eric altogether out of the way. It was probably not difficult for him to procure that consent from his creatures, and a messenger was sent to Oreby-hus, in Up-land, where the unfortunate man was then confined, to give him poison. If he refused to take the draught, he was to be slain at once. This last precaution was unnecessary. What could he wish to live for longer, now that no bond remained between himself and this world ? His child was taken away ; his wife had disappeared. There was nothing to render his bondage any longer bearable—death could be his



soup, and he expired
imprisonment, and the

This is not the only
has witnessed the hum
late ex-king of Sweder
tween his abdication and
in the state apartment
fate, Gustaf III. built a
prison. At the time it
indecent, but the sequel
might be as fatal as the
believed that Gripsholm
abode of royalty; there are
connected with it which r
certain tenure of power to
One of the most curious

Henry VIII. and queen Elizabeth, his intended daughter-in-law, are prominent. Gustaf III. has followed his example, and filled a splendid circular room with his cotemporaries. Portraits of Oxenstjerna are numerous throughout the palace; and in a gallery appropriated to the great men, I observed those of Linnè and Baron Swedenborg, the author of "New Jerusalem." There are no less than three hundred rooms in the castle, mostly of an irregular form, and the furniture scanty, except in the part occupied by Gustaf III.

For my return I had the choice of two roads, the direct one to Helsingborg; which passes along the Lake Wettern and Jonköping, and the western way to Gottenburg. The latter appeared the most eligible at this time of the year, as by keeping to the northward I could avail myself longer of sledging, and avoid the tedious travelling that one must expect when the snow begins to thaw. Wading through mud and water with the prospect of every minute being half-drowned by an upset, is all that

can be expected when the traveller has arrived at the point where wheels are to be resumed.

The tract of country that lies between Stockholm and Gottenburg is the best peopled, and altogether the most productive in the kingdom. The northern side of the lake Mœlare is studied with little towns, varying in population from two to four thousand inhabitants, no inconsiderable number in a country where the first city reckons seventy-five thousand, and the second only twenty-four thousand. These towns are tolerably thriving from the little trade they carry on with the inland provinces, transporting timber and the produce of the gorges^s to Stockholm.

A few miles from Stockholm the snow began again to fall, and, irksome as it was in itself, the consequences were still more disagreeable. For many miles the whole rural population had turned out, armed with wooden shovels, and were employed in cutting a passage through the hills that choked the road. In some places the track was confined between walls of snow

twelve and fourteen feet high. After every severe fall the peasantry of the neighbourhood are obliged, by law, to come out and remove the obstructions ; and several drivers complained greatly of the many days during the last two months that they had been taken from their own work to this drudgery, for which they received no remuneration. When the track requires merely a slight levelling, a snow-plough, formed of boards, in the shape of the letter A, and drawn by two, four, and, sometimes, eight oxen, is used.

Though the country still retained its wintry appearance, a new plague came on. The sun was so powerful in the middle of the day as to blister the face, and the dazzling whiteness of every thing around caused no slight aching to the eyes. The change from morning to mid-day, is from one extreme to the other. I have seen the mercury fall twenty degrees below zero (Celsius) at five o'clock and seven hours after the heat, in the sun, has been so great as to be painful.

for the figure is painted in

Sweden from the Danes.

Eric XIV. is buried. His
befitted the tenant of m
letters E. R. alone mark h
mockery of his fallen sta
enclosed in his coffin. I
Swede, that when the pres
ago, visited this church, in
Westeras, he ordered the
opened, and broke the sc
among the dust and bones
unworthy of ruling.

The fate of his son Gust
was little more fortunate,
is not, like his, sullied v
Eric was married to Aba

He easily found persons willing to ingratiate themselves by any atrocity, and the boy was on the point of being carried away from Stockholm in a sack, when two noblemen rescued him, and to ensure him against further attempts of the kind, had him transported to Germany, where his uncle would be less able to plot against him. For many years he passed his time at the universities of Thorn and Wilna, where he made great proficiency in chemistry and languages, the latter a study in which all his family appear to have excelled. This part of his life seems to have been one of poverty; he is even said to have gained his bread by affording amusement of an evening to strangers in the low taverns of the University. It was probably his straitened circumstances that induced him to comply with the request of Sigismund, John's successor, that he should enter the church. This man, who was king both of Poland and Sweden, thought that when once in holy orders the young man would be as little in the way as if dead, and, therefore, made him

an Abbot. His new position, however, did not agree with his inclination, and, abandoning his order, he passed over to Russia, at that time governed by Boris Gudonof. The Czar offered him his daughter in marriage, and fortune, for once, seemed willing to smile on him ; but, as he steadily refused to join in any expedition against his native country, the match was broken off, and he returned to his humble position of refugee. He was afterwards imprisoned, and ended his chequered life at Kapkin, in 1606, where he was suspected of having been poisoned.

While standing in the yard of the inn at Arboga, where I stopped some days, I remarked several Lapland girls, who were also sojourning there. Though they had kept out of sight since my arrival, I had sufficient evidence of their being there, by hearing them sing hymns and songs, in chorus, through the greatest part of the day. Their style of singing, which is peculiar to themselves, is by no means disagreeable, and as they were all young, their voices were soft and melodious. The last piece

of my luggage was deposited in my sledge, and I prepared for my journey by creeping into my Lapland moudda, which I still wore on the road, as most convenient for moving in. At the sight of this article of their national dress the whole troop, consisting of seven or eight girls and two or three boys, rushed out to see if a countryman of theirs was in the yard. When they saw I was really clothed in reindeer-skins, many were the questions that were put to me—whether I had been in Lapland, and if I did not like it very much, and if I would not wish to return there. Long was the examination which every part of the costume underwent, and I thought I could not in any way so appropriately conclude the meeting as by producing a cruse of rum. One or two of the girls, at first, made some difficulties; but, after a little hesitation, they partook very freely of the liquor, and soon emptied the vessel that held two bottles. At this part of the ceremony, an additional person, who had probably witnessed the former proceeding, stepped in and joined the party. This

was no other than a girl of the same part of Lapland, but of the extraordinary height of seven feet. Though her face was by no means ugly, her first appearance was very repulsive. Her gigantic limbs were clothed in fur, and her gait was of that awkward description which is generally observable in overgrown people. Her sisters were of the usual stature in Lapland, and by their side she had something unearthly in her look. Her companions told me they expected to be next year in England, where they were to exhibit themselves ; so, drinking a draught to our next meeting, I bade the damsels farewell, and proceeded on my journey.

The remainder of my way to Gottenburg became particularly tedious from the thaw that had taken place to the westward. As I approached the river Gotha, I found the whole country inundated, and was at last obliged to abandon my sledge for a cart. I tried a two-wheeled one for some twenty miles, but finding it rather hazardous to depend entirely on the horse's footing, was glad to exchange it for

a waggon, in which I made my entry into Gothenburg, fully satiated with spring travelling. Goetheborg is very regularly built, and looks a prosperous place ; I doubt, however, its having entirely recovered from the effects of the cholera in 1834. In no place in the north did that dreadful disease commit such ravages, for whole families were cut off by it. The mortality, no doubt, must in a great measure be attributed to the stagnant canals that intersect the city in all quarters. The numerous bridges that form the communications between the opposite sides give a pretty effect to the town, yet none aspire to any style. Great numbers of British, chiefly Scotch merchants, are settled here and do the principal business. It is also one of the four towns in which Jews are allowed to remain and trade ; they being limited to Stockholm, Norrköpping, Goetheborg, and Carlskrona.

As a diligence runs weekly between this place and Helsingborg, I was glad to avail myself of it and release myself from the many annoyances attendant on travelling with "Skyuts," and

give myself up entirely to the care of a conductor. I cannot, however, deny that some of the most agreeable peregrinations I have made, have been in Sweden, and my wanderings have not been few. As the Arabs say, I am a son of the road, and few roads have afforded me more amusement than those almost interminable ones of Sweden, which seemed to have been measured by giants, and would require seven-leagued boots to move along in with proper rapidity.



